

F O U R  
T R A C T S :

- I. A Discourse against Revenge,  
(shewing the Exorbitant. Passions in  
Man) from *Mat. V. 21, 22.*
- II. Questions and Answers concerning  
the Two Religions; *Viz.* That of the  
Church of *England*, and the other of  
the Church of *Rome*. Intended for the  
Use and Benefit of the Younger Sort  
of People.
- III. An Account of an Evening-Con-  
ference with a Jesuite in the *Savoy*,  
*Jan. 22.*
- IV. A Disswasive from Popery, being a  
Letter to a Lady to preserve her from  
Apostacy from the Communion of the  
Church of *England*.

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*With a Preface by Mr. EDWARDS.*

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THE  
PREFACE.

**H**AD I attempted my self to have published any thing of this nature, which I now would only recommend; I should then have had too great reason to have made an Excuse, and indeed too just fears not to have obtain'd it: but since the Goodness, Authority, and Picty of the deceased Author, are so very deservedly valued by the World, I shall only concern my self to let the Reader know that the following Tracts were his own writing, as I was desired by the Bookseller to do, and which piece of Service I could not well deny him, having compared the Sheets with some Manuscripts that are in my hands, and with some occasional Notes of his upon the Bible and Common Prayer-Book, which were lately sold with his other Books; and indeed after their resolution to publish them under his name,

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*it was but reason that the Reader should be satisfied they were such as they were represented.*

*And besides the Authority that they may have, the Usefulness of the first to restrain the Provocations and Revenges which this Age, as moral as it pretends to be, is so very full of, and of the other to dispel the Carelessness and Indifferency of the World towards any Worship at all, as full of Religion, or rather pieces of it as at present it is, may now add to its recommending.*

*For first, the Sinfulness of Revenge is so very great, and the pretended occasions for it so very many, that the fatal fore-runners of it, Anger and Malice, can't be too many ways, nor indeed by any, too severely exploded: For though it's certain that the Courage of the present Age does not, any more than the Piety, come up to the Excellency of the Antient and Primitive time; yet that which is call'd Courage, (no better it may be than an ill tim'd and ill manag'd Resentment,) will fly oftner in their Faces than their Conscience still, and raise the Concern for an affected Reputation, much above the care for their truly real and eternal Safety.*

*For*

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For a mistaken Resentment quickly forgets all Obligations of Nature, Country, Religion, and the same Flesh and Blood too sometimes, in the height of an encourag'd Passion, and unthinking fury; and the frequent repeating it serves only to harden the most recommending Tenderness of our Natures to another Person, and at length it may and does too sometimes, make a Man forget that self preserving Care that is so unquestionably due to his own: Whereas the excusing a Provocation may include the having a Power to revenge it, and besides this, here is the Credit of the most difficult and recommending Mastery gain'd, that of a Mans self: and thus a Man is most likely to secure that Dominion which he would be assuming even over his Neighbour, whose Pride and Resentment, when too provokingly urg'd, may prove as great as his. If Men would therefore comply with this agreeable restraint upon such ungovernable Passions of their Nature, Revenge would be left to God, who was always pleas'd to reserve it to himself who can best right our injur'd Innocence, with an hand whose Correction he can withdraw at his Pleasure, (which command of our selves we to be sure can't pretend to;) so shall we  
be

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*be freed from the indecencies of Revenge that can never be amended, if the sinfulness of it should be repented of; unless a Man once provok'd were as willing to forget, as the Almighty, though never so incensed, is to forgive upon the Submission of a repenting Offender.*

*Thus much may serve to prepare the Reader to attend to the following Discourse with a true Intention not to resist such influence, as by the Blessing of God it may have upon him, as that good Man doubtless pray'd it might when he writ it, and as I heartily desire it may to all that read it.*

*In Relation to the other Tracts they may without doubt be very serviceable, not only to the Younger in years, but to those too whose neglect of their time may in this respect, have shamefully levell'd them with those, whose smaller Time and Judgment have not yet impower'd them to attend it; for I'm afraid it is too great a Truth, that many of our own Church apprehend as little of the Articles of that Faith they pretend to be of, and the Object of our Worship, as the generality of the other Church do of the Language of their's, and we are not only willing, but concern'd*

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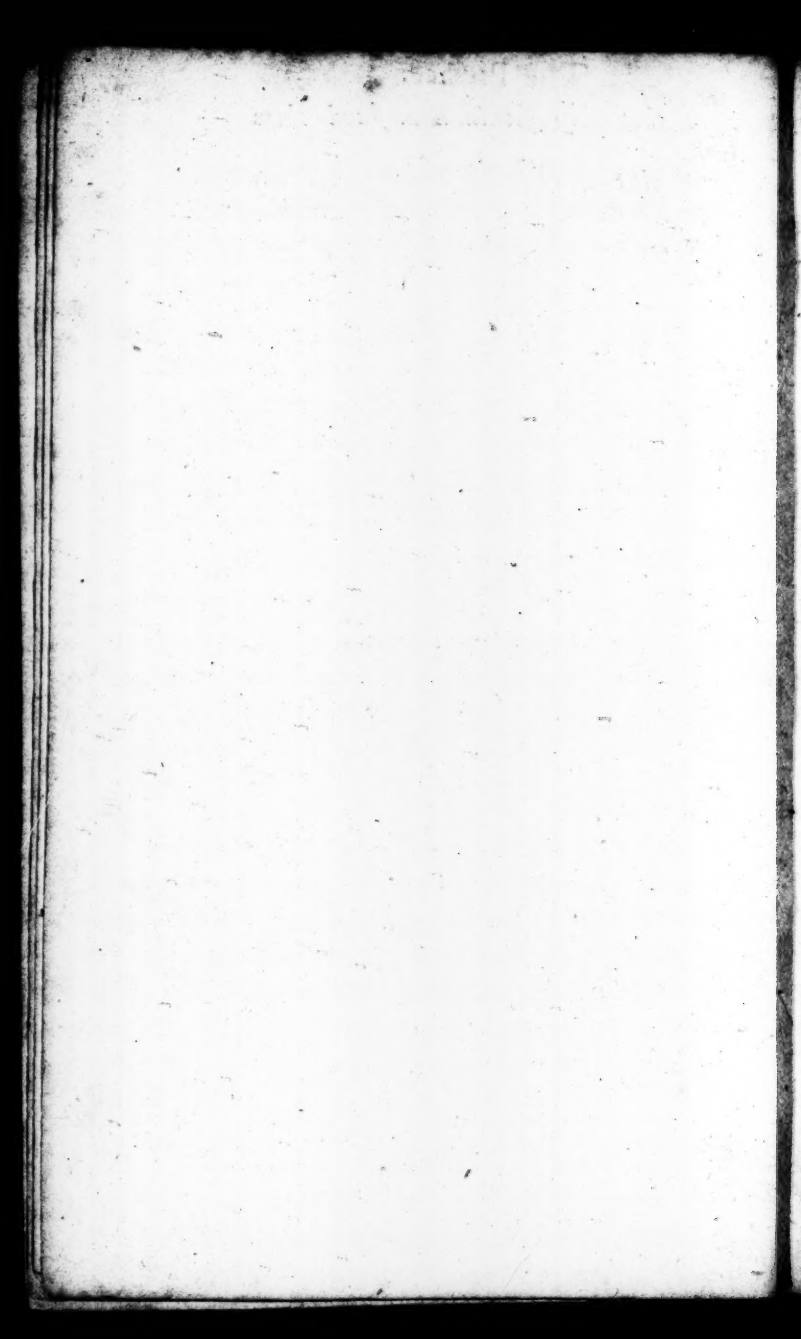
too, that they should understand them both.

So that if the first Tract should any ways contribute to restrain the troublesome and uneasy disorders of Anger and Malice, and the dismal procedure of double returning Revenge; and the other should furnish any unapprehending Person with a reason of the hope he has of his Salvation whenever it should be demanded or any attempt made to remove him from it, which the distance of it don't seem to secure, more than the Dissatisfactions Controversies, and Carelessnesses may threaten.

And if the Account, that is here given of the Absurdities, Impieties, and Vanities, that are in that Worship, should convince any Person that he ought to decline it and retain his own, the Church would be serv'd: No Person that I know of injured, and the Reader, I hope, as well as my self very well pleas'd in it.

London, May  
27th. 1697.

W. EDWARDS.



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## A DISCOURSE against Revenge, &c.

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Mar. V. 21, 22.

*Ye have heard, that it was said by them  
of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and  
whosoever shall kill, shall be in dan-  
ger of the judgment :*

*But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry  
with his Brother without a cause, shall  
be in danger of the judgment ; and  
whosoever shall say to his Brother  
Raca, shall be in danger of the Coun-  
cil ; but whosoever shall say thou  
Fool, shall be in danger of Hell fire.*

**F**alse Teachers without doubt are  
very dangerous Men. The Mur-  
therer kills the Body, these the  
Soul ; and by the false Doctrines they  
sow in Mens Heads and Minds, they not  
B only

only obstruct their Salvation, but lead them into Perdition : Indeed if the Errors be light and trivial, the hurt that's done is not great ; and while the erroneous Doctrine reaches no farther than Speculation, it can deserve no very severe Censure ; but when it spoiles and sullies the Worship of God, or proves an impediment to the faithful discharge of our Duty to God and Man, Poison is not so prejudicial to the outward, as such Opinions are to the inward Man, and the better part. And such were the erroneous Doctrines of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* : Blending the Traditions of their Fathers with the Law of God, and entertaining both, with an equal Faith and Veneration ; they made an odd kind of Divinity, and quite perverted the design of Religion, which was to make Men universally good. This was particularly visible in the notion they had of the sixth Commandment, which they interpreted to the carnal advantage, and worldly Interest of their People, teaching them, that if they did but use that Care and Circumspection as not to kill a Man, they did not only answer the design of the Lawgiver, but would prevent the Penalty annex'd, and their being taken  
notice

i. e. Contradictions.



notice of by the Magistrate, and punished accordingly : but as for Wrath, and Malice, and reproachful Language, whereby Murder and such bloody Practices are too often occasion'd and promoted, these they told them were things not forbid in the primary Intention of the Law of God, and consequently they need fear no Punishment. To which preposterous Exposition our Saviour opposes his Divine Authority, proves the gloss of their Elders upon the sixth Commandment to be false ; and shews, That what they thought did not deserve so much as a temporal Judgment, God would punish with eternal Vengeance, if not forsaken, or repented of betimes : *Ye have heard, that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill, shall be, &c.*

This is a Text upon which Criticks and Learned Men have bestow'd many excellent Observations, becausethewords relate to some antient Customes of the *Jews*, in their Judicial Proceedings against Malefactors and others : But as I do not think it proper to entertain you with Curiosities, so if there be need of making use of any of those Observations, I shall do it no farther, than they

serve to elucidate some of the obscurer Passages of the Text, and make way for the practical Points I shall insist upon for your Edification.

As to the Sense of the Words, it's briefly this :

1. Whether we render the Expression in the Original, ἐρρήθη τοῖς ἀρχαίοις, *It hath been said by them of old time*, or *to them of old time*, as some Translations read it, the difference is not very material : for as by those of old time are meant either the antient Masters of Tradition, who lived some hundred years before that time ; or the Ancestors of the *Jews*, to whom those Masters of Tradition pretended to deliver an oral Exposition of the Law of *Moses* ; so if we read, *by them of old time*, the meaning is, You have heard that it hath been deliver'd, and said by the antient Masters of Tradition : And if we render it, *to them of old time*, the sense is, You have heard it delivered to your Ancestors and Forefathers, by those antient Masters of Tradition. I restrain, you see, this Passage to Tradition ; for though the Sense of it is to be found in the Law of *Moses*, yet the Maxim, as it is related by *our Saviour* here, is not express'd there neither with that

that Connection : And therefore I conceive the antient Expositors of the Law contracted what *Moses* had said, into this *Motto*, *Whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment.*

2. What is said here of Killing, is meant of killing a Man, and hath respect to the sixth Commandment, *Thou shalt do no Murder.* By which Law, as the killing of Beasts for Man's use could not be intended, nor destroying venomous and noxious Animals, nor executing of Malefactors by order of the Magistrate, nor depriving Men of their Lives in a just and lawful War, but an unjust depriving a Man of his Life; so there was a Punishment suitable annex'd to the breach of that Law; which Punishment was to be ordered and inflicted by the Magistrate; and so far as the Law of God given by *Moses* went, all was right, and just, and reasonable; but here the Masters of Tradition had made a Distinction, that if a Man had hired another to kill his Neighbour, or had let loose a wild Beast upon him, whereby he died, the Magistrate was not to inflict the Punishment of Death upon him, but he was to be left to the extraordinary Judgment of God; but if he killed him

in person, either by a Sword, or by a Stone, or by some other Weapon, then the Magistrate was to execute the Penalty appointed by the Law of *Moses*, upon him; but this was not all, for they taught moreover, that though a Person who killed another was liable to capital Punishments, yet the Wrath, the Anger, and the Malice that prompted him to it, was a thing that deserved no Punishment, and therefore this was not a thing to be feared; and here came in Tradition, which misinterpreted the Law of *Moses*, though it stands to reason, that he who forbids a Sin, at the same time doth forbid the occasion of it, and all such things as do naturally lead to the Commission of it.

3. Our Saviour, to shew that Wrath, and Anger, and Malice, and reproachful Language, were liable to Punishment, as well as Murder, and that God would certainly lash them, as well as the greater Enormities, takes notice of several degrees of unjust Wrath and Anger. The first is a sudden Effervescence, or Boiling up of the Blood, or some violent Agitation and Commotion of the Passions upon a frivolous occasion; and therefore adds *εἰς ὧν*, without sufficient cause, which though it be not in some Copies, yet

yet must necessarily be understood here ; not denying but that Anger in some cases may be lawful, but shewing withal, that if the occasion of the Anger be slight and trivial, and the Anger even in a lawful cause be excessive, and going beyond its just bounds, it provokes God's heavy Displeasure.

But then if this secret Anger within, or the first boyling over of the Blood, proceeds farther to contemptuous words, and that a Man in Wrath and Malice gives his Neighbour reproachful Language, despising and undervaluing him, by using Expressions and Names, which wound his Reputation, intimated by the word *Rakah*, *i. e.* vile and worthless Wretch ; though I am apt to believe that an angry and threatning noise and posture is chiefly meant by that word in this case, the Sin rises higher, and becomes greater, and consequently deserves a severer Judgment ; but then, if this Anger mounts higher yet, and from an angry threatning Posture and Noise, which betrays Wrath and Indignation, it proceeds to the calling our Neighbour *Fool*, *i. e.* wicked and reprobate Wretch, deserving the eternal Anger both of God, and all good Men, which is the meaning

of the word Fool in the *Proverbs of Solomon*; as the Sin becomes more heinous by this Aggravation, so the Punishment of it in the other World will be greater yet.

4. What our Saviour saith here of a certain Gradation of Punishments due to the several Lusts, and degrees of Wrath and Anger, *Judgment, Council, Hell fire*, must be understood of Penalties in the next World, yet with allusion to the degrees of Punishment among the *Jews* in this Life. Now among the *Jews*, there were three degrees of publick Infamy, according to the nature of the Punishment inflicted on Men for their Crimes, and the more publick the Punishment was, the greater was the Infamy. If an Offendor were brought before the Court of Three and twenty, which was an inferior Court of Judicature called here, being guilty of the Judgment, and there condemn'd, he was infamous, and a great Disgrace it was to him, but in a lower degree: If he were brought before the *Sanedrin*, or the Great Council of the Nation, consisting of LXX Elders, in the nature of our Parliament, and by them adjudged to Death, the Infamy and Disgrace was greater: Yet if, lastly,

ly, a Man were condemn'd to be burnt in the Valley of *Hinnon* or *Tophet*, where all the Trash and Filth of the City of *Jerusalem*, the Garbage and dead Carcasses were burnt, and where antiently they offered their Children to *Moloch*, and where a perpetual Fire was kept to consume all things that were offensive and nauseous, and which by the *Jews* themselves was look'd upon as an Emblem of Hell fire, the Infamy was greatest of all: According to these degrees of Infamy here on Earth, Christ shews there will be degrees of Punishment for the several degrees of unjust and unlawful Anger, in the other World; for most certainly this Threatning cannot be understood with respect to this Life, there being no such thing inflicted upon Men, for Anger and reproachful Names, on this side the Grave; and whereas the *Jews* were generally afraid chiefly of Punishments in this Life, Christ thought fit to acquaint them and us, that we had far greater reason to be afraid of the Punishments in the next, as more dreadful and more grievous than any they could fear here on Earth. And this is the meaning of the Commination in the Text, *Who-soever*, &c.

From



From the Words thus explained, arise these following Truths:

I. Antiquity is no warrant for erroneous Doctrines and Practices.

II. Murder is a Crime, which the Magistrate must by no means suffer to go unpunish'd.

III. Wrath and Anger without a just Cause, hath its degrees, and according to the degrees of the Sin, the Punishment in the next World will be proportionable.

I. Antiquity is no warrant for erroneous Doctrines and Practices.

The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* here pretended, that what they taught and practis'd concerning the sixth Commandment, was deliver'd to them by them of old time. But our Saviour shews, that this pretence could be of no use to them, but rather betray'd than cover'd their Nakedness.

Error pleads Antiquity as well as Truth; and though nothing be more antient than Truth, for it is from Eternity, and before ever Error appear'd in the World, Truth had the universal Monarchy, yet Error is as antient as the Fall. As soon as the Apostate Angels forsook their Habitation and Integrity together,  
Error



Error began to shew it self, which soon spread it self through the habitable World ; when Man, tempted by the Devil, consented to his false Principles, and went astray from the center of his Happiness. No doubt, Antiquity is venerable, but it must be in a good cause, and where Truth and *that* join together, the Argument is perswasive, and may be call'd invincible. But a thing is not therefore true because it is antient, nor doth it command assent, because of its uncommon Pedigree. Sin and Error lose little of their Deformity by appealing to antient times, and an Error is so much the worse, by how much it defends it self by the Practice of former Ages.

Idolatry, and all the Vices in the World, may shelter themselves under this roof; and there is no Villany so great, but Men may find a President two or three thousand years ago. The Priests of the Temple of *Diana at Ephesus*, called the Wicker-image of that Goddess *Geometris*, fallen down from *Jupiter*, meerly because it was antient ; and the Temple having been seven times ruin'd, and built up again, and this Image still preserved, was to them an Argument that this Worship must be lawful. Indeed, at  
this

this rate, a Man might even defend Sodomy with the Romish Arch-bishop *Joannes Casa*, because it was practised in the Cities which God destroyed with Fire and Brimstone, and the *Jews* would have had a good Plea for their Adoration of the Queen of Heaven, because their Fathers had been used to it.

This very Argument makes the Allegations of the *Roman Church* from Antiquity ridiculous, and they might as well espouse the Heresies of *Ebian* and *Cerintus*, because they lived in and about the Age of the holy Apostles. When God hath given a Standard of Truth, that must be the Rule whereby Truth and Error must be concluded; and when that saith a thing is true, it is not its being revived, or taught but yesterday, that can make it false; and whatever is contrary to that Form of sound Words, must be erroneous and false, though it were as old as the Rebellion of *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*. The Worship of Images is not therefore lawful, because *Irene* a superstitious Woman 900 years ago, got a company of illiterate and passionate Men together, who decreed it in a Council; nor is Sedition and Disobedience to Magistrates therefore justifiable, because

because *Gregory II.* Pope of *Rome*, in the eighth Century, shook off the Authority of *Leo Isaurus*, his Emperor. And therefore let none of you plead for any Sin because it is the fashion, nor allow themselves in actions offensive to God's Holiness, because it hath been the Custom of the Country to do so for many Ages. This will be but a poor defence in the last day to alledge, that you follow'd the sinful Practices of your Ancestors; or to say it was unmannerly to depart from that which was done before you for many Generations. To be sure, Men were good before they were bad, and there was a Golden Age before that of Iron took place in the World; and therefore if Antiquity be a motive, nothing can challenge your Embraces more than Righteousness, and dominion over your Appetite and Passions, for that was in the World before Mankind knew what it was to depart from the living God.

Murder is as antient as the time of *Cain*; yet no civiliz'd Nation under the cope of Heaven will allow of it, because of its Antiquity: So far from it, that in all Countries it is order'd to be punish'd with the Death of the insolent Creature: Which calls me to the II. Ob-

II. Observation, That Murder is a Crime which a Magistrate must by no means suffer to go unpunished ; for it hath been said, *Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the Judgment.* The Substance of this hath been said by Almighty God, as well as by them of old time ; and so far as God hath said it, it is a Law unalterable. Murder is a truly crying Sin, for *the Voice of thy Brother's Blood crys unto me from the ground,* saith God, Gen. IV. 10. This is a Crime which Nature it self trembles at ; and yet we see there are Wretches and Monsters, who can steel and harden their Consciences against the Horror of it : But God thunders against it from Heaven ; and because the Crime is so great, he hath made a Law, and given it to all Mankind, *That whoso sheds Mans Blood, by Man, i. e. by the Magistrates, shall his Blood be shed,* Gen. IX. 6. Nay, if a wild Beast tears a Man, who is going about his lawful Occasions, in pieces, though an irrational Creature, God will strike that Beast dead, because it kill'd *Sanctius his Animal*, a nobler, and more sacred Fabrick. So'tender is God of the Life of Man, nor would he suffer his Tabernacle or Sanctuary to be

a refuge for such a barbarous Wretch. The Horns of the Altar could not save the Offender, and from the very Temple he was to be dragg'd to the Gallows, or place of execution. The whole Country comes to be defiled by the horrid Crime, where it goes unpunish'd ; and that Magistrate makes his Soul black with guilt, that connives at the inhumane Action ; or out of respect to Greatness, or Rank, or Quality, pardons the intollerable Extravagance : Where this remains unpunish'd, when known, a Nation falls under the Curse of God ; and whatever Judgments befall them, an ounce of the unpunish'd Murder, as the *Jews* say of the Sin of the *Golden Calf*, may be said to be an Ingredient of their Calamity.

We have a Distinction in our Law betwixt Mans Slaughter and Murder ; A Distinction, which I wish did not too often cover that Bloody Crime, which ought to be avenged by publick Justice. The Word of God knows no such Distinction ; and tho' it provides for Chancemedly, and gives pardon to the Man that unawares, and without any intent to kill, proves the occasion of another's Death ; yet this is nothing to that Act, which Wrath and Anger, whether sudden, or preme-

premeditate, doth produce to the Horror of the Creation.

Neither doth the Law of the Gospel, nor the Law of *Moses* in this case before us, reverse the Law of Nature ; and God is so resolute, that the Magistrate shall punish such Offenders with Death, that where they do not, himself sometimes takes the Sword in hand, and executes the presumptuous Destroyer of his Image : Nay, many times makes the Wretch that did the Fact, and escapes the Magistrates Sword, his own Executioner : *Alphonfus Diazius*, a *Spaniard*, and a *Roman* Catholick, having kill'd his own Natural Brother for turning Protestant, for which he receiv'd the Praises and Applauses of considerable Men in the Church of *Rome*, haunted and hunted at last by the Furies of his own Conscience, desperately hang'd himself at *Trent*, *de callo Mule sue*, saith the Historian, upon the Neck of his own Mule.

It's true, there are those, who guilty of such Crimes, do yet escape the revenging Arm of God and Man here, but the more terrible will be their Cup of trembling hereafter ; and God lets some, like stall'd Oxen, grow fat on this side the Grave, that with greater Terrour they

they may fall a Sacrifice, when they die, to hellish Furies. Nor can Duels and single Combats upon an Affront receiv'd, and Challenging one another to fight, be excused from sharing in the Heinousness of this Guilt; for whatever fine Names, and plausible Descriptions, the Law of Honour may have made of such Actions; he that kills another in a Duel, though he gets a Pardon of his Prince, will be Arraign'd in the last day among the Murtherers, who shall have their Portion in the Lake which burns with Fire and Brimstone.

I do not deny, but that in the dark times of Popery such Combats have been allow'd of, and publick Prayers have been said for Success in such Duels, but what Credit can a Cause receive from Ages, in which to understand Greek was a Crime, and Hebrew next to Heresie. We need not wonder, that *Babylon* the Mother of Harlots should permit such things, whose Garments have been dyed Red with the Blood of the Saints of God, and which hath Tricks and Ways to Canonize Assassins, to consecrate Murther, and to Christen Massacres, Services of Religion. To call upon you to take heed of having a hand



in Blood, were to discourage you from drowning or poisoning your selves, or running a Sword into your own Bowels, for indeed this is no better, and whatever varnish may be put upon it, it is precipitating your selves headlong into the Gulf of Perdition. There is in this Sin, all that can aggravate a Deed; it is to raise a Hell in your Bosom, and the thing it self speaks so much abomination, that to name the Sin, is to give you a thousand Arguments against it. But then that ye may not be under any temptation to this Sin; let bitterness, and wrath, and anger be put away from you with all Malice, which leads me to the third Proposition.

III. That Wrath and Anger without a just cause have their Degrees, and according to them, the Punishment in the next Life will be proportionable. *For whosoever shall be angry with his Brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the Judgment; and whosoever shall say to his Brother Raca, shall be in danger of the Council; but whosoever shall say thou Fool, shall be in danger of Hell-fire.*

That some Anger is lawful, is evident,  
from



from hence, because Christ himself was angry, and very angry sometimes, and so were the Apostles; and we are permitted to be so, but with this Caution, *be angry and sin not*, i. e. so as not to Sin; *Eph. IV. 26.* So that all anger is not a mark of Damnation. But then when the Author and Captain of our Salvation, Christ Jesus, and his Holy Apostles were angry, it was only against Sin, and out of a Zeal to Vertue, and when Men were obstinate and would not be perswaded to do their Duty; and a Sense of God's Glory kindled the fire of their Passion; in which Case to be angry is a Perfection, and to be passionate, a Christian accomplishment; provided still that the bounds of that Anger be observed, and it's heat do not turn into Wild-fire; that it be not attended with unseemly Expressions, nor accompanied with furious Gestures and Actions. I do not deny but a Man may be angry with his Servant, a Father with his Children, and a Master with his Schollars, and proceed even to Correction; but then it must be, because they neglect their Duty, or will not hearken to wholesome Admonitions,

and when gentler Addresses will do no good, and the Anger must be more upon the account of their Sin, than out of any Desire to revenge, and it must be an Anger mingled with Pitty and Compassion, and which ends in Prayer for the Offenders, and it must be free from Fury and reviling Language: And being kept within these bounds, I find no fault with this Anger. But this is not the Anger my Text speaks of, and against which Christ levells his Commination here, for that's anger without sufficient cause, even Anger, because our worldly Interest is not promoted, as we expected, or because our Honour and Reputation is touch'd, or because something, which gratifies our Lusts, is with-held from us, or because our vain Desires are not cocker'd and flatter'd, or because such a Person hath not given us the Title and Respect we look'd for, or because we cannot digest a Reproof, or because we are cross'd in our Designs, or because such a Man is not of our Opinion, or because he will not conform to our Humour. These are the things which commonly provoke to Passion, and this Anger, the farther it goes, the worse it grows, if from thoughts  
and

and secret grudges; it proceeds to contumelious, reproachful, and reviling Language, to calling the party ill Names, Fool and Rogue, and Villain, and Rascal and Knave, and Cheat, and Hypocrite, and such other Titles, as modesty will not suffer us to name, it becomes greater; and if from Words and Expressions it goes farther yet, even to Actions of Revenge, and settles in Hatred, in Rancour, and inveterate Malice; it then shuts out the righteousness of God, and lets in the Devil, and invites evil Spirits to come and Lodge in that house, and the last Estate of that Man grows worse than the first.

And is not this the Case of abundance of you? Do not you see something in this Glass that's very like you, and resembles your Temper? And do but consider, what weakness, what impotency of Reason, and Spirit you betray and discover by such doings? Is not this an inlet to *confusion and every evil work*, Jam. III. 16. Is this the Christian Spirit? is this to know, what manner of Spirit you are of? Is this treading in your Masters steps? Is this following his Example, *Who when he was*  
 C 3 *reviled,*

*reviled, reviled not again?* Dare you appear before the Son of Man in the last day with such a Disposition of Soul, never yet seriously repented of? Is this to resist the Devil? Is this to purifie your Hearts? Have you so learned Christ? Is this to be Children in Malice, as you are bound to be by your Profession? Is this to crucifie the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts, upon the least Provocation, presently to be in a huff, presently to let your Tongues loose, and to break forth against your Brethren in Language fitter for *Turks* and *Indians*, than for *Christians*? Is this to be meek as Doves? Is this to Love one another with a pure Heart fervently? Is Hell-fire nothing but painted Flames? Hath our great Master threatned it, and do we make light of it? Can you seriously reflect upon this Commination, and be unconcerned? And is not this threatning a Call to Repentance? What a mercy is it, that God will accept of a sincere Repentance after such Provocations? But how can you repent of your Passion, if you do not mortifie it? How can you mortifie it, if you do not conquer it? How can you conquer it, if

if you do not strive? How can you strive, if ye do not use the proper means and weapons God hath appointed in the Gospel? How can you profess sorrow for this Sin, when you fall willfully into the same Sin again? Do you call a mock Repentance, godly Sorrow! Or do you take that to be Repentance which is separated from actual Reformation?

Ecclesiastical History tells us of two Bishops that fell out, and proceeded even to reviling Language, and so parted; toward night one of them sent the other word, *Brother, the Sun is going down*; with that, the angry Man remembred St. Pauls saying, *Let not the sun go down upon your wrath*, and made haste, and found out his offended Brother, and fell on his Neck and kissed him. The *Pythagoreans*, though Heathens, did the like, for if they had quarrell'd one with another in the day time, they would not go angry to Bed, but shak'd hands before Sun-set. Did Heathens do so, and shall Christians be strangers to this Practice? Flatter not your selves with this, that you kill nobody in your Anger, so did the *Pharisees*, but must ye therefore act against the Law of Rea-

son and Religion, because you do not run stark Mad? Do you own your selves Disciples of the Lord Jesus, and will not you believe what he saith in the Text? Hath he peremptorily forbid you all Bitterness and Wrath, *and speaking evil one of another*, and will not you obey him? Doth he assure you, that it renders you obnoxious to Hell-fire; and do not you think, what if I should fall into that Fire in my anger? Are you sure you shall not? Hath God told you, that he will not strike you dead in a Fit? Do not you express all that's terrible by Hell-fire? and is not the possibility of falling into it, a sufficient Defence against this inordinate Passion? Do you hope for Christ's Rewards, and will you deprive your selves of them by your willful disobedience?

Did you go about mortifying that bitterness of Spirit, like Men in good earnest; how could ye fail of Success? Did ye pray fervently against it, watch against it, chide your selves frequently for it, shun the occasions of it, check it when ye find it rising, set before you the danger and believe it. Call to mind the meekness of your great Master, and the

won-

wonderful Patience of the Holy Apostles in their private Injuries, how could your undertakings miscarry? Doth anger according to *Solomon's* Verdict, rest in the bosom of Fools, and do you take your selves to be wise Men for it? O be better advised, and if the Mercy, the Patience, the Clemency, the Compassion of God toward you, cannot melt down your angry, your wrathful Constitution; stand in awe however of your Ruin, of your everlasting Ruin, and remember who it is that said and protested, and will Act according to his Protestation, *Whosoever shall be angry with his Brother without a Cause, &c.*

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Wrote to Mr. [illegible] of [illegible]  
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QUESTIONS

AND

ANSWERS

CONCERNING

The Two Religions,

*VIZ.*

That of the CHURCH of  
*ENGLAND,*

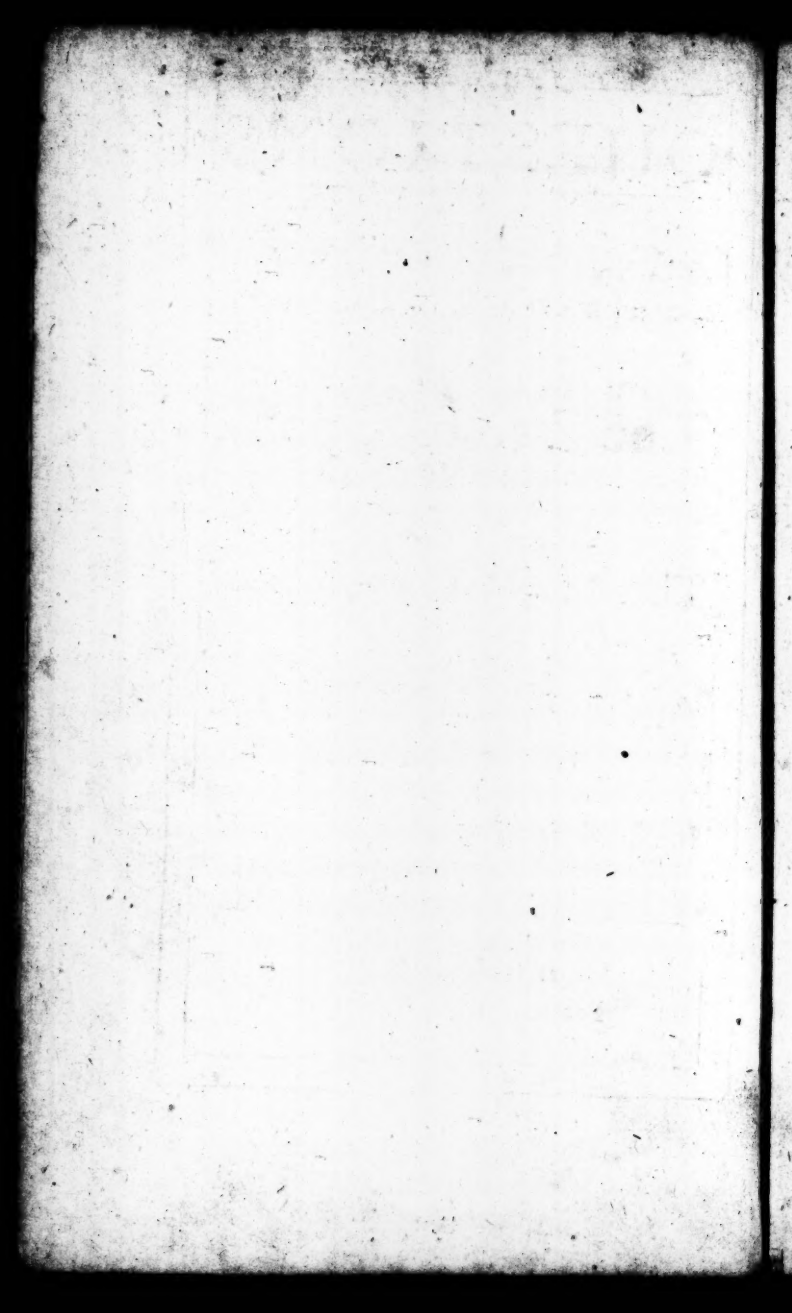
And the other of the CHURCH  
of *ROME.*

Intended for the Use and Benefit  
of the Younger Sort of People.

---

*L O N D O N;*

Printed in the Year 1697.



## Questions *and* Answers concerning the Two Religions, &c.

Quest. 1. **H**OW doth the Church of England differ from the Church of Rome?

*Answ.* The Church of *England* keeps close to the Antient Creeds, commonly call'd the *Apostles*, the *Nicene*, and that of *Athanasius*: The Church of *Rome* hath added new Articles of Faith to these Antient Creeds, which we reject.

Quest. 2. **W**hen did the Church of Rome add these new Articles?

*Answ.* In the Council of *Trent*, not much above a hundred years ago, for it began in the year 1545, and ended in the year 1563.

*In the New Confession of Faith compiled and published by Pope Pius IV. a little above a hundred years ago.*

Quest. 3. **W**hat's the reason the Church of England doth not receive those new Articles of Faith?

*Answ.* 1. Because they are not to be found in the Word of God.

2. They

2. They are many of them contrary to the Word of God.

3. No Church in the World hath Power to make New Articles of Faith.

**Quest. 4. What are the New Articles of Faith the Church of Rome hath added to the Antient Creeds?**

*Ans.* They are these following:

- I. " That the Traditions of the Church  
" are to be received with the same  
" Faith and Veneration, we owe to  
" the Holy Scriptures.
- II. " That there are seven Sacraments;  
" *Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucha-*  
" *rist, Penance, Extreme Unction,*  
" *Orders, and Marriage;* and that  
" these confer Grace.
- III. " That among the Ceremonies u-  
" sed in the *Roman* Church, the  
" Publick Service in *Latin*, or an  
" unknown Tongue, is a commen-  
" dable Service.
- IV. " That in the Mass there is offered  
" to God, a true Propitiatory Sacri-  
" fice for the Living and the Dead.
- V. " That in the Sacrament of the Eu-  
" charist the Bread and Wine are  
" changed into the very Substance  
" of Christ's Body and Blood.

VI.

- VI. " That Laymen need not receive *Under one*  
 " the Sacrament of the Eucharist in *kind only.*  
 " both kinds, and that it's sufficient  
 " for them to communicate in one.
- VII. " That there is a Purgatory, or a  
 " Place after Death, where good  
 " Mens Souls are tormented for  
 " smaller Sins; and relieved by the  
 " Alms and Prayers of the Living.
- VIII. " That the Saints departed this  
 " Life, may and must be pray'd to  
 " and invoked, and that their Re-  
 " liques must be worshipp'd.
- IX. " That the Images of Jesus Christ,  
 " and of the Virgin *Mary*, and of o-  
 " ther Saints, may and ought to be  
 " worshipp'd.
- X. " That Indulgences, or Dispensati-  
 " ons of the redundant Merits of  
 " Saints, are very useful things.
- XI. " That Auricular Confession, or  
 " Confession of all our mortal Sins,  
 " with the Circumstances of them  
 " to a Priest, is necessary to Salva-  
 " tion.
- XII. " That the Church of *Rome* is  
 " the Catholick Church, and Mi-  
 " stress of all other Churches.

**Quest. 5. Why must not Traditions be received with the same Faith, that is due to the written Word of God?**

*Ans. 1.* Because the written Word of God is perfect, containing all things necessary to Salvation: And that does not direct us to Traditions, but rather warns us against them.

2. Because the Traditions of the Church of *Rome*, many of them are false, and many uncertain.

3. Their Traditions are not Traditions which have been receiv'd in all Ages, by all Churches, and in all Places; for such only are the true Apostolical Traditions.

4. That they are not absolutely necessary, their own Practice shews, in that they reject Authentick Traditions, and particularly that of Communicating Infants.

And here you may note, The Reason why they fly to Tradition is, because they cannot prove their New Doctrines by the Word of God.

**Quest. 6. Why do not you believe seven Sacraments?**

*Ans. 1.* The Holy Ghost in Scripture hath no where declared such a number.

2. This

2. This precise number of Seven Sacraments was not heard of in the Christian Church, till twelve hundred years after Christ.

3. There are but Two Sacraments mention'd in the New Testament ; I mean such as are true and proper Sacraments, *viz.* Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

4. The Council of *Trent* was the first that made this Number an Article of Faith.

**Quest 7.** Why do not you allow of Publick Service in Latin, or in a Tongue not understood by the People ?

*Ans.* 1. Because St. Paul writes a whole Chapter against it ; 1 Cor. 14.

2. Because the Publick Service ought to be for the Edification of the People ; and Service in an unknown Tongue cannot edifie.

3. The Practice of the Primitive Church is against it.

4. Some of the wiser Men in the Church of *Rome* themselves, find fault with this Publick Service in an unknown Tongue.

5. This Practice in the Church of  
D *Rome,*

*Rome*, is only to serve some Worldly Ends.

**Quest. 8. Why do not you admit of the Sacrifice of the Mass?**

*Ans.* 1. Because the Church of *Rome* tells us, that they do sacrifice Christ every day in the Mass, which is directly contrary to the 9th Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *Heb.* 9. 25, 26, 27, 28.

2. Because there can be no true and proper Sacrifice without Death; and it sounds dreadful to a Christian Ear, that the Priest kills Christ every day, or which is all one, puts his God to Death.

3. It destroys the end of a Sacrifice, which is to testify our Subjection to God; but in this Sacrifice of the Mass, the Offerer, who is the Priest, must be greater than the Offering.

4. The Lord's Supper is only a Commemoration, or Representation of Christ's Sacrifice, and a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, but no proper or true Propitiatory Sacrifice.

**Quest. 9. Why do not you believe a Transubstantiation in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.**

*Ans.*



*Answ. 1.* It is against all Sense, for we may see, and feel, and hear, and taste, and smell, that the Bread and Wine after Consecration, are Bread and Wine still.

2. It is against Reason, that Christ's Body and Blood should be in a thousand places at once.

3. It is against Scripture, for Christ protests, that *his flesh profits nothing*; *Joh. 6. 63.*

4. It is against the Nature of a Sacrament, which is an outward visible Sign of something Spiritual; and Transubstantiation destroys the Sign.

5. Christ himself explains what he means by saying, *This is my Body*, when he adds, *Do this in remembrance of me*; which *remembrance* supposes the absence of his Natural Body.

6. It is against that Article of our Faith, which saith, *That Christ is to continue in Heaven till the Restitution of all things*: And there is no necessity we should take the words literally any more than the words in *Jo. 10. 7. I am the door, &c.*

7. *This is my Body*, is a Phrase or Form of Speech exactly like that of the Lamb in the Passover; *This Lamb is the Passover*, i. e. the Memorial of it.

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8. These

8. These words, *This is my Body*; do not naturally infer a substantial change, by the Confession of some Papists themselves.

9. They themselves cannot be sure of this Change, because they say it depends upon the Intention of the Priest.

10. The Absurdities that flow from the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, are innumerable; for then Christ must have eaten himself, the Disciples must have eaten up their Master; Christ's Body may be lockt up in a Box for half a year together and longer, &c. Whereas the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, that the Bread represents Christ's Body, and upon that account is his Body, hath no Inconveniency in it.

11. Transubstantiation is against the Doctrine of the Primitive Church, which calls the Bread the Figure of Christ's Body.

**Quest. 10. Why do not you think it lawful for Laymen to receive the Communion in one kind only?**

**Ans. 1.** Because Christ saith expressly to the Disciples, *Drink ye all of this.*

2. The Practice of the universal Church of Christ for a thousand years together, is against it.

3. The

3. The Council of *Constance* in the year 1416. was the first that durst venture upon this Sacriledge, and deprive the Laity of the Cup in the Sacrament, contrary to Christ's Institution, and the Practice of the Primitive Church.

4. The Priests in the Church of *Rome* dare not consecrate without the Cup, nor do they think the Sacrament perfect without it; and if they do not think it perfect without the Cup when the Priest takes it, why should they cheat the Laity.

**Quest. 11. Why do not you believe a Purgatory?**

*Ans. 1.* Because the Scripture makes no mention of it.

2. The Scripture mentions only two places Men go to after Death, which are Heaven and Hell.

3. In good Men there is no Condemnation; *Rom. 8.1.*

4. Good Men are said to rest from their Labours, from the moment of their Death; *Rev. 14.13.*

5. This Doctrine is injurious to the Merits of Christ, as if they did not procure for us a full Remission of our Sins before we die.

6. The Doctrine of Purgatory was no Article of Faith before the Council of Trent.

7. It was brought in by Monkish Stories, and for the profit of the Clergy.

8. The Primitive Church did not believe it; for the Fire the Fathers Talk of, is that of the Day of Judgment.

9. The Greek Church at this day, doth not believe it.

10. Though the Primitive Church did pray for the Dead, yet it was not for Souls that were in Torment, but for Souls in a state of Felicity and Bliss, that God would shew them mercy in the last day, and hasten their happy Resurrection, and give them a blessed Sentence.

**Quest. 12. Why do not you pray to the Virgin Mary, and the Saints departed, and why do not you worship their Relicks?**

*Ansiv.* I Worship not Saints departed, nor pray to them.

1. Because the word of God is directly against it, for it saith, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, Matth. 4. 10.

2. It is absurd, and unnatural to worship  
ship

ship Persons, who are not present to receive our Worship, or to speak to Beings, who we neither are, nor can be sure that they hear us.

3. Prayer is a spiritual Sacrifice ; and therefore must be only offer'd to God. External Sacrifice offer'd to Creatures, by the Confession of the *Papists* themselves would be Idolatry ; and therefore much more a spiritual Sacrifice, as it is of greater consequence than the other.

4. There is no Example among the *Christians* for the first Three hundred years after Christ, of their Invocation of Saints departed.

5. We are expressly Commanded to go directly to God in Prayer, *through our only Mediator Jesus Christ*, Psal. 50. 15. 1 Tim. 2. 5.

6. It's a great dishonour to God, to beg that of Saints, which God only can give ; such is their Prayer in the Office of the Blessed Virgin : Mary, *Mother of mercy, protect us from the Enemy, and receive us in the hour of Death.*

7. If they did only pray to Saints to pray for them, it be would an injury to Christ's Mediation, for this is to make a hundred Mediators or more.

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8. This

8. Their praying to Saints in Heaven, to pray for them, is not the same with our desiring our Neighbours here on Earth to pray for us, for we know our Neighbours hear us, nor is that any more, than a friendly Request; here are no formal Prayers offer'd to our Neighbours, and besides for this we have a Command, but none for the other.

*I do not worship the Relicks of Saints departed.*

1. Because, if I am not to give religious Honour to Saints, it's certain I must give none to their Relicks.

2. There is no Command, no Example in Scripture for this Practice.

3. This Trade with Relicks was not known, or heard of in the Church, till very near Four hundred years after Christ.

4. Devout men carried St. *Stephen* to his Burial, but there was no stir made with his Relicks.

5. Some of the Wiser sort in the Church of *Rome* confess themselves, that there are great Cheats in Relicks; and the Bones of Thieves and Murtherers are sometimes ador'd for Relicks of Saints.

6. By this worshipping of Relicks  
great

great Corruption and Superstition came into the Church.

7. The miracles pretended to be wrought, are very often nothing but Delusions of the Devil.

8. By this Veneration of Relicks; Mens minds are diverted, and turned away from that rational, and spiritual Worship the Gospel requires.

9. It's evident, that in the Church of Rome they put great Trust and Confidence in Relicks, and abuse them into Superstition.

**Quest. 13. Why may not the Images of God, of Christ, of the Virgin Mary, and of other Saints be worshipped?**

*Ans. 1.* Because it is peremptorily forbid in the Second Commandment. *Thou shalt not make to thy self, &c.*

2. God declares his anger against those, that pretend to make any similitude of him, *Deut. 4. 15, 16. Es. 40. 18.*

3. The Primitive Christians would not suffer Images so much, as to be painted on the Walls of Churches.

4. Several Councils of old have condemn'd this Worship.

5. The *Carpocratians* were counted Hereticks

Hereticks in the Primitive Church for worshipping the Images of Christ, and of *St. Paul*, in private.

6. God doth not only forbid placing a Divine Vertue in such Images, but falling down before them in a Religious way; and whatever Mens intentions are, he interprets their falling down before them, as worshipping the Image it self, *Jerem.* 2. 26, 27. *Esa.* 44. 17.

7. The Heathens excused themselves with the same Plea, that the Church of *Rome* doth now, that they did not Worship the Image, but the Person represented by the Image; yet the Christians look'd upon them as Idolaters.

8. So incens'd were the Primitive Christians against the worship of Images; that *Epiphanius* tore a Veil in the Church, on which an Image of Christ, or of some Saint was painted.

9. Though the second Council of *Nice* established this Image-worship, yet the Council of *Francford*, that follow'd soon after condemn'd those Fathers for their Superstition, and Deflecting from the Rule of Christianity.

Quest. 14. Why do you reject the use of Indulgences, and Dis-  
pensations



penitations of the treasure of the Church?

*Ans.* 1. Because they are built upon false Foundations, such as Purgatory, the Supererogations of Saints, or doing more than was necessary, God's imperfect forgiving of Sins, and Satisfactions to be made to the Justice of God.

2. These Indulgences are things not so much as heard of in the Primitive Church, for they are wholly engrossed by the Pope, who sends his Servants abroad to sell them to any Stranger for Money.

3. Though in the Primitive Church the respective Bishops in their Diocesses, relax'd the time of a true Penitents Severities he was to undergo; yet they neither intended to free the Penitents from the Pains of Purgatory, nor pretended to apply to them the superfluous merits of Saints, as is done in these popish Indulgences.

4. They have no Foundation in Scripture by the Confession of their Learned men, and they came very late into the Church, and its plain they are used as a means to get Money.

5. By

5. By these Indulgences men are hindered from a true Repentance; for they pretend to release Men by them, both from Sin and Punishment, at least the People are suffer'd to think so, if they do but say so many Prayers, or go in Pilgrimage to such a place, or fast so many days from some kinds of Meats, or give a large sum of Money for the building of a Church, or go to War against Infidels, &c.

**Quest. 15. Why do not you think Auricular Confession to a Priest necessary to Salvation?**

Here you must Note, That we are not against Confession in the Church of *England*, nay our Church presses it both publick and private to God; and Confession to a pious and able Minister, if the Conscience be burden'd, and upon a Death-bed; but we dare not say as they do in the Church of *Rome*, that a Man cannot be pardon'd or saved, except he Confesses to a Priest.

1. We allow not of it in the sense of the Church of *Rome*. Because there is nothing in the Word of God, that makes the neglect of it Damnable.

2. The Confession used in the Primitive  
tive

tive Church, was made by scandalous Sinners publickly in the Congregation; and therefore is not the same with that practis'd in the Church of *Rome*, which commands the Confessing all mortal Sins with their Circumstances into the ear of a Priest at set times, and before the receiving of the Sacrament.

3. Since it is not of Divine, but Ecclesiastical Institution, it cannot be absolutely necessary to Salvation.

4. It cannot be a Sacrament as they make it in the Church of *Rome*, because it wants Christ's Institution.

5. This Confession to a Priest, as it is managed in the Church of *Rome*, is no Check, but rather an Encouragement to Sin.

Quest. 16. **Why do not you believe that the Church of *Rome*, is the only Catholick Church, and the Mistress of all other Churches?**

Ans. I can never believe, that the Church of *Rome*, is the only Catholick Church.

1. Because there are vast multitudes of Christians in the World, which are not in actual Communion with the Church of *Rome*, and yet are Members of

of the Catholick, or which is the same of Christ's universal Church dispersed all the World over.

2. To say, That the Church of *Rome* is the Catholick Church, is to say, That a part is the whole, or that a House is a whole City, or that one Member is the whole Body.

3. The Primitive Christians did not take the Church of *Rome* for the only Catholick Church.

4. God hath no where in Scripture declared so much.

5. To say the Church of *Rome* is the only Catholick Church, is a most uncharitable Doctrine, and to Damn the greater part of the Christian World.

6. All Churches that do hold the ancient Faith contain'd in the three Creeds are Members of the Catholick Church.

7. The Church of *Rome* is so far from being the only Catholick Church; that her strange Doctrines make her at the best but a very unsound Member of the Catholick Church.

*I do not believe, That the Church of Rome is the Mistress of all other Churches in the World.*

1. Because there is no such Authority

ty given her in the word of God.

2. The Superiority she Claims is nothing but Usurpation.

3. The *Asian*, and *African* Churches heretofore rejected her Authority.

4. The *Eastern* Churches at this day despise her Pride and pretended Authority.

5. The Church of *England* was a free Church from the beginning; and therefore justly maintains her Freedom, and how should that Church be Mistress of all other Churches, that takes Liberty to change Christ's Institutions and Commands, and contradicts the Word of God.

**Quest. 17. Doth the Church of Rome Differ from the Church of England in any other Points?**

*Answ.* Yes, for she holds.

1. That Extreme Unction is a Sacrament necessary to Salvation.

2. That it is unlawful for Priests to Marry.

3. That she is infallible.

4. That the Scripture is not to be read in a vulgar Language by the common People.

5. That the Books call'd *Apocrypha* are Canonical Scripture.

6. That

6. That the Church of *England* had no Power to Reform her self:

All which we deny, as contrary to Scripture and Reason.

**Quest. 18. Why do not you believe, that Extreme Unction is a Sacrament necessary to Salvation?**

*Ans.* 1. Because that Unction, or *anointing sick Persons*, Jam. 5. 14, 15. was a miraculous Gift, and therefore not necessary to be continued:

2. Christ did never institute this miraculous Unction as a Sacrament.

3. The Unction they use in the Church of *Rome*, hath no miraculous effects.

4. The Apostles anointed sick Persons, that they might recover: In the Church of *Rome*, they anoint dying Persons, who are past Recovery:

5. In that place of *St. James*, the saving of the sick Person is ascribed to the Prayer of Faith, not to the anointing.

6. The Sacrament of the Lords Supper is sufficient to comfort the dying Man:

**Quest. 19. Why do you look upon that forbidding Priests to marry, as unlawful?**

*Ans.*

*Ans.* 1. Because St. Paul permits a Bishop, and indeed all Clergy-men to marry, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. 8. 11. *Tit.* 1. 6.

2. The same Apostle saith, to all Men in general, *It is better to marry than to burn*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 9.

3. The same Apostle calls forbidding to marry a Doctrine of Devils; 1 *Tim.*

4. 1. 3.

4. St. Peter himself, an Apostle and a Priest, was a married Man.

5. Several of the Bishops in the Primitive Church were married Men; such as *Spiridion, Chareman, Phileas, Gregory Nyssen, Gregory Nazianzen*, both Father and Son, *Hilary*, and others.

6. It was Pope *Hildebrand*, or *Gregory VII.* the same that first presumed to depose Sovereign Princes, that made the Clergy renounce their Wives, contrary to Scripture; a Man guilty of the greatest Crimes imaginable.

**Quest. 20. Why do not you believe the Church of Rome infallible?**

*Ans.* 1. Because it is only a Pretence founded neither in Scripture, nor Antiquity.

2. It is a Church that hath err'd both in Doctrine and the Worship of God, most notoriously. E 3. God

3. God hath no where promis'd to make any one Church infallible.

4. Themselves are not agreed where this Infallibility lies, whether in the Pope, or in a general Council, or in the diffusive body of Christians.

5. The Word of God is the only infallible Rule to walk by.

6. There is no need of a visible infallible Judge for deciding of Controversies. For,

1<sup>st</sup>. Controversies may be decided without such a Judge, as they were in the Primitive Church, the Bishops meeting in Council, and arguing against Hereticks from the Word of God.

2<sup>d</sup>. A meek, humble, peaceable, and charitable Temper, would decide Controversies better than all the pretended infallible Judges in the World.

3<sup>d</sup>. We do not find, that when there were infallible Judges here on Earth, such as Christ and his Apostles, that all Controversies did cease: Notwithstanding their presence, there were Schisms and Heresies, even among the Christians, 1 Cor. 11. 19.

4<sup>th</sup>. For all the pretences of Infallibility in the Church of *Rome*, they cannot decide



decide the Controversies that are among their own Members.

5th. Both Popes, and General Councils, have contradicted one another; and therefore neither of them can be infallible.

6th. The pretence of Infallibility in the Church of *Rome*, is nothing but a device to uphold their Temporal Grandeur and Dominion.

Quest. 21. **Why do you think, the Church of Rome is in an Error in forbidding the reading of the Bible to the Common People.**

Ans. 1. Because Christ commands all sorts of Men to read the Scriptures; *Joh. 5. 39.*

2. The *Bertheans* are commended for searching the Scriptures; *Acts 17. 11.*

3. The Fathers in the Primitive Church, exhorted the People to the frequent reading of the Scriptures.

4. St. *Paul* charges the *Thessalonians*, to take care that his Epistle be read to all the holy Brethren, *1 Thess. 5. 27.*

5. In the Jewish Church every Family was to have the Law in their Houses, and to teach it their Children diligently; *Deut. 6. 7.*

6. The pretence of the Obscurity of the Scripture in many places, is insignificant, since the Scripture is plain enough in things necessary to Salvation.

7. The Church of *Rome* in forbidding the Bible to the Laity, discovers her fear, and the weakness of her Cause, least the People should see her Errors, and forsake her.

**Quest. 22. Why do not you believe, that the Books call'd Apocrypha, are Canonical Scripture?**

*Ans.* 1. Because the Oracles of the Old Testament were delivered to the Jewish Church, *Rom.* 3. 2. and these were not.

2. The Christian Church receiv'd from the Jews no other Books of Canonical Scripture, but what are own'd as such by the Church of *England*.

3. The *Apocrypha* were not written by Men inspired by the Holy Ghost; and what is Scripture, must be by Inspiration; *2 Tim.* 3. 16.

4. Some of the Authors beg the Readers pardon for their Mistakes, which is not the Language of the Holy Ghost.

5. The Antient Councils have reject-ed these *Apocrypha* as not Canonical, particularly

ticularly the Council of *Laodicea*.

6. In the Primitive Churches they read these *Apocrypha* only for the Instruction of Mens Manners; but did not resolve their Faith into them, no more do we.

**Qnest. 23. Why do you find fault with the Church of Rome for asserting, that the Church of England, once a Member of her Communion, had no power to reform her self?**

*Answ. 1.* Because every Church hath a natural right to shake off the Abuses and Corruptions which are contrary to the Word of God.

2. It is God's Command to private Men, not to suffer themselves to be deluded by the flight of Men, and cunning Craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, and therefore much more is a National Church concern'd to do so.

3. In vain was any Reformation hoped for from the Bishop and Clergy of the Roman Church.

4. It's the proper Office of the Bishops of a National Church, to take notice what Errors creep into their Churches, and oppose them.

5. And that they have right to do so appears from the Examples the Church of *Judah* had in the times of *Jehoshaphat*, or *Hezekiah*, or *Josiah*.

6. In throwing off the power of the Pope of *Rome*, we did not throw off Obedience to a lawful Sovereign, but Subjection to an Usurper.

7. We did no more than what the Orthodox Churches did after the *Arian* Councils of *Ariminum* and *Seleucia*, in setting up the *Nicene* Faith again, which those powerful Councils had banish'd.

8. We made no new Religion, but restor'd the old ; and built no new House, but only swept out of the old the Rubbish which made it unwholesom, and uninhabitable.

*The End.*

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*An Account of the Conference betwixt a Jesuit of the Savoy and my Self, the 2d. of January. Present Mr. Stephens on my side, Mrs. Chamberlain, and Mr. Chamberlain, and the Book-binder about whom the Conference was held (he having been six years of the Church of Rome, but somewhat unsatisfied) and Mr. Lamb. About Seven of the Clock at Night.*

THE first thing Discoursed was about the Doctrine of *Calvinists*, which the Jesuit said, made God the Author of Sin.

I told him, that there are several Expressions, which if a favourable Construction be put upon them will appear to be otherwise.

Next he fell upon *Luther*, who should say that no Man could be damned if he would, but for his Infidelity.

I said it was true, that God condemned no Man, that professed himself a Christian, but for his Infidelity.

The Jesuit asked whether, if a Man committed Theft, he may be call'd an Infidel? I said, he acted like an Infidel, and in that Act was so, because he acted contrary to his Belief.

Mr. *Chamberlain* putting in something about that place, 1 *Tim. 2.* about one Mediator. The Jesuit argued, he wonderd we should talk of one Mediator, when every Man that pray'd for the other was a Mediator.

I told him in a large Sense he might be called so; but in the Controversie before us, were meant Mediators which are religiously worshipped.

Here happened a great rambling Discourse about Faith, *As distinguished from all good Works*; but I told them, that by Faith I did not mean the bare Assent to the Doctrine, but a practical Belief, as it takes in the whole Word of God, and living according to it.

The *Book-binder* was gone to call Mrs. *Chamberlain*, and coming again by this time: The Jesuit said, they were come to satisfie Persons under some Doubts,  
and

and therefore must fall upon some more material Points, and since we Protestants sent people to the Scripture; it was necessary we should begin to talk of the Rule of Faith, and therefore he desired to know; how we knew the Scripture to be the Word of God, and from whom we had received our Bible?

I told him, we had received it from the Catholick Church, whose Testimony was very considerable in this Case.

He ask'd hereupon, when we went off from the Church? From what Church we did immediately receive it?

I answered him, both from the *Western* or *Roman*; and from the Churches of the *East*. However I told him, I would fairly grant him, that we had received it immediately from the Church of *Rome*, and I desired him to make the best of it.

Here he asked, how we could receive the true Bible from a corrupt Church?

I asked him, whether I might not receive a Pearl from a Chimney Sweeper?

He said, we looked upon them for Rogues and Rascals.

Where-

Whereupon I told him, we give them no such Language: However since he used these Names; whether a Man might not receive a 100 l. in very good Money from Rogues and Rascals.

He then argued, That we look'd upon the Church of *Rome* as a corrupt Church; and how can we be sure, that we have the true Bible, since we cannot be sure that a corrupt Church had not corrupted it.

I told him, that they confessed themselves they had not corrupted it; and besides, they could not corrupt it, for the Cheat would have been found out, by the comparing of ancient and modern Copies.

He then asked again, what we counted the Rule of Faith?

I told him, the Scripture.

He asked, whether with a true Interpretation or without it?

I told him, the Scripture with true Interpretation?

He then replied, how we should know the true Interpretation.

I told him, things necessary to Salvation needed no great Interpretation, and the words are deliver'd so plainly, that  
any



any one that runs may Read it.

He then asked, whether every Man was a true Interpreter of Scripture ?

I said, every Man had a Judgment of Discretion ; but there was no Question, there were several Persons that might mis-interpret it ; but if a Man went this way to work, read the Scripture, pray for Illumination, and go to it with a pure Intention ; he might understand things necessary, and he could not err damnably, and in things more difficult, consult by his Guides.

He said, this would establish every Man in his Religion, and a *Mahometan* ought to be directed by his Guide ; and why must we follow the Guides of our Church, and not the Guides of the *Roman* Church ?

I told him, that People bred, and born, and baptized in this Church ; had greater reason to consult their own Guides, than others ; because they had greater Obligations to them.

Still he urged, no Man could be ascertain'd of the true Interpretation of the Scripture without some Judge.

I desired him to name that Judge over and over, but could not bring him to it.

I know not how the Discourse came in here about different Interpretations; and I said the Writers of their Church differ'd in their Interpretation.

He said none of their Writers differ'd from one another in the Interpretation of places relating to Articles of Faith.

I asked him, what he thought of *Extreme Unction*?

He said it was an Article of Faith.

Very well, said I, then I'll prove that *Cajetan* interprets that place of St. *James* of another *Unction*, and saith, contrary to the Council of *Trent*, that *Extreme Unction* cannot be proved from that place.

He said, the Council of *Trent* did not denounce *Anathema* to him that should interpret that place of St. *James*, of another *Unction*.

I then fetcht him down out of my Study *the Council of Trent*, and shew'd him that, *Sess. 14.* it did denounce *Anathema* to them that should not believe.

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So then he said, they laid not the strain upon that place; but *St. Peter* and *St. Paul* had spoken of it too.

I challeng'd him to shew me any place in *St. Paul* or *Peter*, that had spoken of this *Unction*.

He then turn'd it off, and said he did not mean it of any express mention, but only that the Apostles did not use to contradict themselves.

After this either the Jesuit, or Mr. *Stephens*, moved it that there might be another Meeting, and that we should write down all.

I told him I agreed to it; and accordingly we appointed *Wednesday* next the 4<sup>th</sup> of *January*, at Four a Clock in the Afternoon, and so they departed, the Jesuit and Mr. *Lamb*; The Bookbinder and Mr. *Chamberlain*, and his Mother, and another young Woman. And the Bookbinder and Mr. *Stephens*, and myself, and *Chamb.* and his Mother staid a while; when I fell in discourse about Invocation of Saints, and fetcht him down the *Office of the Virgin Mary*; *The Contempt of the Glories of the Virgin Mary*; and shew'd him, that they did not only pray to Saints to pray for them,  
but

but begg'd the same Blessings of them they did of God.

The Bookbinder said, *the Contemplations of the Glory of the Blessed Virgin* was not allow'd of in their Church: He said if they did more than pray to Saints to pray for them, he did not rightly understand his Church.

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*The End.*

A  
DISSWASIVE  
FROM  
POPERY;  
BEING A  
LETTER  
TO A  
LADY  
TO

Preserve her from Apostacy from  
the Communion of the Church of  
*ENGLAND.*

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L O N D O N;

Printed for *W. Hinchman, S. Keble, and*  
*D. Brown.* 1697.

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*A DISSWASIVE from Popery,  
being a Letter to a Lady to preserve  
her from Apostacy from the Commu-  
nion of the Church of England.*

*Madam,*

**A**ND are you indeed got into the only Catholick Church? And are you sure the Men you have lately believed have not deceived you, as you fancy we have done? (for tho' you may be so charitable as to think, that we have not intentionally cozened you; yet since you cannot suppose us to be both in the Right, you must necessarily conclude, that we have at least ignorantly abused and imposed upon you) and did you ever rightly consider what a truly Catholick Church does mean? Men of Sense and Reason always believed, that a Church which holds the truly Catholick Faith, is a true and sound Member of the Catholick Church;

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and dares Malice it self say, that we do not hold the Apostles, the *Nicene*, and *Athanasius's* Creed? The Church of *Rome* her self confesses, that these Creeds contain the truly Catholick Faith: And most certainly, when the *Nicene* Council was celebrated, and in *Athanasius's* time, that Church was counted a sound Member of the Catholick Church, that held that Catholick Faith, which is expressed in those Creeds; and do we not hold that Faith? Do we not stand up at it to express our Readiness to defend it? And what have we done, that we must not be counted a Catholick Church? Is it because we will not receive things which the Church of *Rome* hath since added to the Catholick Faith? Is it because we will not admit of the Doctrines which that Church was first induced to believe by the Darknes and Ignorance of the Ages it lived in, and at last loath to part withal for fear they should be thought to have been so long in an Error? Is it because we will not yield to things which we apprehend to be directly against the Word of God, and destructive to that Catholick Faith the Christian World hath professed in all Ages? Is it because



because we will not deceive the People of the Cup in the Blessed Sacrament, which Christ intended as a mighty comfort to them? Is it because we will not believe the Miracle of Transubstantiation against four of our Senses, and Reason, and Scripture to boot? Is it because we will not suffer the Worship of God, or that which is very like it, to be given to Creatures, because of the very appearance of the evil of Idolatry, which we are commanded to shun, as much as Idolatry it self? Is it because we will not believe a Purgatory Fire, which cleanseth little, but Peoples Purfes of their Money? Is it because we will not indulge the Pride and Arrogance of a Man at *Rome*, who having first wheedled the Christian Princes out of their Means and Power, hath at last made that Power and Riches hereditary to his Successors, under a pretence of a Legacy from Christ? Is it because we will not believe, contrary to the Apostles Rule, that publick Prayers, which are intended for the benefit and understanding of the Multitude, must be said in a Tongue unknown to the People? These must certainly be the Reasons, why we cannot now pass with

the Church of *Rome* for Members of the Catholick Church. That these things were not in the Antient Catholick Creeds, I hope you are convinced; for you have read them over, and found none of all these Additions in them: And now I beg of you, in the name, and by the mercy of that Jesus in whom you believe, to judge, which is most likely to be the truly Catholick Church, ours or theirs? Ours that keeps to the truly antient Catholick Faith, or theirs that hath added things contrary to Scripture, and Reason, and Antiquity? And dare you continue in a Church where your very Communion with it is an Approbation of their Actions, which are directly contrary to the command of Christ? Can there be any thing more contrary to it than their denying the Cup to the Laity? And when you receive the Sacrament but in one kind, contrary to Christ's Command, do not you sin and allow of the Sin of that Church you are in? Is not your Disobedience to Christ's Command a Sin, or can you imagine that you are more obliged to obey Men than Christ himself? You confess you dare not live in any one Sin; But how dare

dare you live in this Sin? You talk of the benefit of Confession and Absolution, when that very Priest to whom you confess, and who absolves you, lives in that Sin you are guilty of, and neither absolves himself nor you from it; and you both continue in it, as if the Blind had a mind to lead the Blind? How dare you act thus against your Reason and Conscience? Are you not afraid when you are going to confess, that God will laugh at your Mock Confession, since you neither confess that Sin of living contrary to Christ's Command about the Cup, nor are willing to part with it? Tell me not here that you drink the Blood of Christ in eating his Flesh; if so, to what purpose doth the Priest consecrate Wine for himself, if he drinks the Blood of Christ in eating his Flesh? But suppose the Bread were transubstantiated into the Flesh and Blood of Christ, you know that the not giving the Cup of Blessing to those that come to the Lord's Supper, is contrary to Christ's Institution, who distinctly consecrated the Cup, and gave that to his Disciples, who were Representatives of all Believers, as well as the Bread, and peremp-

torily commanded, *Drink ye all of this,* and, I hope, you do not call eating the consecrated Wafer drinking the Wafer. But let Us grant you your strange Doctrine, that you do participate of the Blood of Christ in eating the consecrated Wafer, who gave your Church Authority to alter Christ's Institution? How can Men dispence with an expresse Law of God? Can they annull what God would have Established, and continue to the Worlds end? And can you consent to so great a Sacriledge? Doth not some horror seize on you, when you seriously think that you approve of the Priests sinning against so notorious a Precept, and which he that runs may read? And pray Madam, wherein have you bettered your self in going over to the Roman Church? Is this your proficiency in Religion to forsake a Church, where you felt the lively Oracles of Heaven coming warm upon your Soul, and to joyn your self to a Church, where you hear nothing but Latine Prayers, and where the Priest, if he be not a good man, may as well Curse you as Bless you, for any thing you understand of his Language or Devotion? Is this

Your

Your proficiency in Religion to leave a Church where you were taught to Worship God in Spirit and in Truth, and now to cleave to one where they teach your Prayers to go upon Crutches of Crucifixes, Beads, and Images ? Doth this look like that Noble Religion which Christ taught the World, and whose design was to advance our Rational Souls by Contemplation and Meditation ? O, Madam, you are too Young to know the Tricks of that Church you live in ; they are more politick Heads than yours is, that had the contriving of it. Bold Men, that had Learnt not to Blush at a Lye, and then thought it their interest to Hector the World into a belief of it. We that can Read Books as well as they, and know the History of the Church as well as they, can see through all these devices, which they perceiving are angry with Us for discovering the Cheat. What was it Madam, that you wanted in our Church to carry you to Heaven ? did you want that which the Apostles and the Primitive Christians never wanted ? I mean did you want more Articles of Faith than they subscribed and believed ! If you wanted that, we Confess we

could not supply you, for we dare say nothing, and believe nothing with Divine Faith, but what *Moses* and the Prophets, and Christ and his Apostles have taught us. If the Scripture contains all things necessary to Salvation, then we teach all that. If the Church of *R O M E* knows more Articles than Christ or his Apostles knew of; we will admire her insolence, but cannot satisfy her unreasonable desire. Did you want strictness of Life in our Church? If all the Commands of the Gospel can make you Holy, We teach them all and press them upon the People, and I presume you do not aim to be Holier than Christ and his Apostles would have you to be. Hath the Church of *R O M E* another Gospel to teach you than that we did instruct you in? if they have, much good it may do them, We are not fond of the Apostle's Curse, *Should an Angel from Heaven bring another Gospel to you let him be accursed.* I know your common Plea that We Protestants cannot rightly interpret the Scripture, because We pretend to no infallibility. And do you blame Us for not being so impudent as the Church of *R O M E*?  
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There is no Protestant but would be glad there were an infallible Interpreter of Scripture instituted by God and recommended to Mankind.

But where shall we find him? Who is it that God hath imparted this Honour to? If you say the Fathers, you know not what you say, for the Fathers differ many times as much in interpretation of the Scripture, and are as contrary to one another as any Men. If you say the Church that's a hard Word; if you mean Christ's Universal Church, dispersed all the World over, you must tell us where it is that this Church hath left an infallible Comment upon the Bible, and how is it possible for a man that will be resolved in a point to go to all Christian People in the World; if you say the Church of *ROME*, you must first shew Us her Commission for this infallible interpretation. Secondly, you must prove She hath infallibly interpreted the Scriptures, and that those interpretations are infallible in all places. Thirdly, you must agree among your selves what part of your Church is infallible, whether the Pope, or an Universal Council, or all Christian People, or whether all these

these together. To say, that this Infallibility lies in the Church, though you know not where, is to say a Needle lies in a Bottle of Hay, and he hath good luck that finds it. Nay, I think, the Church of *ROME* hath been so modest, that notwithstanding all her pretences to infallibility, She never hath dared to obtrude a Comment on the Bible as infallible, nor did I ever see any Interpretation of the Bible made either by Pope or Council which hath pretended to Infallibility. If that Church be infallible why do not their own Divines agree in Interpretation of Scripture? if there be an infallible Sense of the Scriptures in that Church, then the Members of that Church are mad not to keep to that infallible Sense, especially if they know where to fetch it, and they offer great injuries and affronts to their Church in differing so much about interpretation of Scripture, when their Church can give them an infallible Sense of it. For that Church having, as they pretend, the Holy Ghost to guide them in all things, I suppose that Spirit assists her in Interpretation of one place of Scripture as well as in another: if they  
say



say it doth infallibly assist them in some places and not in all, they destroy their own Principle, and how shall a man be sure, that just in those Points that are in dispute between Us and them, they are Infallible? Is the Spirit divided? Or is he not always the same? Or doth not he exert his power upon all occasions?

*Madam*, who so blind as those that will not see? Who sees not that the pretence of Infallibility is nothing but a juggle, a device to maintain a tripple Crown, and an Engine to carry on a temporal Authority? God indeed hath promised that his Church dispersed thro' the World, shall last to the World's end, and that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against her, but that promise differs very much from a promise of Infallibility; and suppose it did inferr an Infallibility, how comes the particular Church of *R O M E* to ingross it to herself, that is at the best but a Member, and a very unsound one, of Christ's Universal Church? It is one thing to be secured against being destroyed, and another to be free from all possibility of Error. There is no doubt but a sober rational man, that prays earnestly for  
illumi-

illumination, and reads the Scripture much, and considers the Circumstances the Holy Writers were in when they writ, and the Occasions of their writing, and hath the advantage of Learning, of Languages, and History, may give a very true Interpretation of Scriptures, such an Interpretation as no man can rationally contradict, tho' he hath not recourse to a Visible infallible Guide, and tho' himself be not infallible. Things may be very certain, tho' they are not infallibly so, and he that can make things out so that a prudent man cannot but give consent to them, and hath no just cause to doubt of their truth, may justly challenge belief from other men. But I will not insist upon this point because I never heard you speak much of it. I will come a little closer to those reasons, that moved you to go over to the Roman Church, whereof the principal was this, that you were troubled in mind upon the account of your Sins, & could get no satisfaction in Our Church, tho' you sought it, like *Esau*, with tears; whereas you did no sooner confess to a Roman Priest, and receive Absolution, but you presently found unspeakable comfort.

And are you sure, Madam, that the  
peace

peace and satisfaction, you found in that Church was not delusion? you tremble at that word; but lets consider the Nature of your peace. When you were in our Church, either you did truly repent of all your Sins, or you did not. If you did not, most certainly you could have no solid peace, but if you did truly repent, as you say you did, what could hinder you from applying the Promises made to penitent Sinners, to your self, which are the true grounds of comfort and satisfaction? may be you wanted a Voice from heaven to confirm the Promise of the Gospel, but have you since heard such a Voice from heaven in the Church of *Rome*? I think not; if you truly repented in our Church, then certainly by the Word of God you were assured that your Sins were pardoned, and if they were pardoned, why should you not comfort your self with that pardon? That which makes you rejoice now, is because you believe your Sins are pardoned; but if when you were of our Church, you verily believed you truly repented, you could not but believe that your Sins were pardoned, and consequently you might have taken as much comfort, as you do now. But the Minister

nister of the Church of *England*, you say, gave me no absolution, which the Roman Priest did. Why, Madam, did any of our Ministers deny your Absolution, when you could assure them that your Repentance was sincere? did you ever ask Absolution, and were you refused? Nay, I appeal to your Conscience; did not those Ministers you conversed withal assure you over and over, that you need not doubt of the pardon of your Sins so long as you did detest and abhor them, and watch, and strive, and pray against them, and were sincerely resolved to commit them no more, and did avoid the very occasions of Evil? and what was this but Absolution, which however you might have had performed with greater Ceremony, if you had had a mind to it. It is no very hard matter to guess at the rise and progress of your peace and satisfaction in the Roman Church. All new things please, and provided they have but a good face, allure our fancy, and this being pleased, it's very natural to defend them; and having once defended them, our Love to them advances, and by degrees we think our Honour and Credit is too far engaged

engaged to part with them. We see how Children are quieted with new trifles (pardon the uncourtly comparison, I know not how to shun it) and the new object, they never saw before, surprizes and charms them, makes them fix their Eyes upon it and cry, if they cannot have it. In the nature of Children we see our own, and embracing new objects, which our sickly fancy is roving after, is but the Scene of Childrens longing for new play things, changed; the Novelty of the thing you were venturing upon, the new Church (new indeed, new to you, and new to Almighty God) which you were to joyn your self to, the Stool of Confession in the Church, and the Priests new habit, and mortified face (which perhaps he owes more to his Country, than to his Vertue) and affected gravity, and assuring of you that their absolution had a wonderful Vertue and Efficacy, all these together surprized you, and raised your expectation, and struck some kind of reverence into you. Your mind being thus possessed with the Idea's of these new things you never tried before, and working upon your affections, and moving your will  
to

to confess to this man of Wonders, you naturally fell into a fancy, that so much Formality and Ceremony different from that you had been used to in our Church, had more charms in it, than our plain and honest way, and then laid the stress of your pardon upon the new Priests absolution in that formal manner, where-with your fancy being impregnated, it soon diffused a cheerful air in your countenance, and raised some gladness in your heart, because you had now done something more than ordinary, as an Antidote against your Sin. And from hence arose your pretended peace and satisfaction, or delusion rather, because you laid the stress of your pardon upon the absolution of that Roman Priest, and not upon the sincerity of your repentance. If a Priest could forgive Sin's, whether men Repent or no, Then indeed you might have laid the stress of your Pardon on that forgiveness of the Priest, but since by your own Confession, that absolution of the Priest signifies nothing except people truly repent, for you to build your comfort on that Absolution, when it should have been founded upon your sincere Repentance, cannot but be

be a false fire, and a counterfeit comfort ; if you say, you did not fetch your Peace from that Absolution, but from the sincerity of your Repentance, you catch your self ; for if your true Repentance must be the foundation of it, then you might have taken the same comfort in our Church : If you still reply, you could not, you only mean you would not, for true Repentance is true Repentance in any Church ; and if true Repentance causes true comfort, it would have caused true comfort in our Church as well as in the Roman, and therefore there must be some cheat in this comfort.

The fancy you have since taken up, that the reason why you found comfort in the Church of *Rome*, upon your Confession and Absolution, and none in ours, must needs be, because the Priests of that Church are true Priests, and those of ours are not, is as solid as your Peace. If we have no true Priests in the Church of *England*, then most certainly the Church of *Rome* hath none. The Bishops, which in the beginning of our Reformation did ordain Bishops, Priests, and Deacons among us, were ordained by Bishops of that Church ; and if the Character of

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Orders

Orders, by their own confession, be indelible, then it was not all the Thunders and Lightnings of Excommunication at *Rome* could annul it. It's true, your ghostly Father very confidently tells you, (a Quality incident to that sort of Men) That our first Protestant Bishops never received Orders from Bishops of the Church of *Rome*; but one would admire what Spirit doth possess these Men, that they dare contradict all the publick authentick Records we have of their being consecrated by Bishops of the Church of *Rome*; they might as well deny, that there were no such Kings of *England* as *Henry VII.* and *Henry VIII.* (for we have nothing but publick Records to shew for it) as deny that the Bishops of the Reformation were never consecrated by Bishops of the Roman Perswasion. I am perswaded that if any Papist should come into trouble about the title of an Estate he hath, and did but know that the name of his Ancestors, the manner of the Conveyance, and his just Title were in some publick Record or Register, he would soon make use of it, alledge it as a sufficient proof, and thank God for preserving a  
Record



Record that is so much for his advantage. † I know not what can be a better Testimony in matters of fact next to Revelation, than publick Records and Registers ; and we dare venture our Reputation upon it, that in the Authentick Registers of the respective Arch-bishops of *Canterbury*, where fear of being counted Knaves and Fools, for putting in things contrary to what was publickly known, may justly be supposed to have kept the publick Notaries from asserting things notoriously false.—In these Registers I say it will be found, what Succession our first Protestant Bishops had ; how Arch-bishop *Parker*, the first Arch-bishop of *Canterbury* under Queen *Elizabeth* (to go no higher) was consecrated *December 17. 1559.* by four persons then actually Bishops, and who had formerly been Ordained by Bishops of the Church of *Rome*, (*viz.*) *William Barlow* in *Henry* the Eighth's days Bishop of *St. Davids*, under *Edward* the sixth Bishop of *Bath and Wells*, under Queen *Mary* driven into Exile, and returned under Queen *Elizabeth*, *John Story* formerly Bishop of *Chichester*, *Miles Coverdale* formerly Bishop of *Exeter*, and

*John Hodgkins* Bishop Suffragan of *Bedford*. Not to mention that the Queen's Letters Patents (in case any of the other should be sick or forced to be absent) were directed to three Bishops more, that had formerly been Popish Bishops, and were turned Protestants, (*viz.*) *Anthony* Bishop of *Landaff*, *John* Bishop Suffragan of *Thedford*, and *John Bale* Bishop of *Offery*. But all this hath been so clearly demonstrated out of the publick Records, first by *Mr. Mason*, and since by Arch-bishop *Bramhal*, that he that writes of it can only transcribe out of them; and those that deny these Records must be Men of strange Foreheads, and of the greatest Disingenuity. From these Men that had their Priesthood from the Church of *Rome*, our Priesthood is lineally derived; so that if our Priesthood be not valid, theirs cannot be; and if Heresie doth not make the Episcopal Office void, nor disable a Man from conferring Episcopal Order on other Men (as is evident from the second Council of *Nice*, with your Church an Oecumenical Council, which received Bishop *Anatolius*, though consecrated by *Dioscorus*, a Heretical Bishop;) if, I say, Heresie doth

doth not make the Episcopal Order void, then suppose we were Hereticks, our Priesthood, which is derived from Popish Bishops that turned Protestants, must be a true Priesthood still; and to this purpose I remember one of your Church said lately, *Once a Priest, for ever a Priest.*

*Madam*, if you desire to know the Truth, be honest and sincere; you should act like a Person that hath a mind to be satisfied, and search the publick Records, and till then believe not every Tale that's told you: The common plea of your Priests, that our Records are sophisticated, and that we have put in what we please, argues only Boldness and Ignorance, when they can shew neither where, nor when, nor by whom they were corrupted. Those that talk so, seem neither to understand what a publick solemn thing the Consecration of a Bishop is in *England*, nor to reflect, how difficult it is to fill a publick Register with Falsities, as to matters of fact, when there are so many hundred Men that know what is done at such a time, and view the Records, and would most certainly speak of it, if they found a flaw

in the Relation. But if we should deal thus with the Church of *Rome*, question all their Registers in the *Vatican*, and say, which we might do with far greater reason, that they are things packed and invented by Men, that have a mind to keep up a Faction, I know what Language we should meet withal. But will you boast, say you, of having derived your Orders from the Church of *Rome*, when you believe the Church of *Rome* to be an idolatrous Church? Madam, it is not the Office of a Bishop in your Church we find fault withal, but the Abuses of it. A Church that's guilty of very great corruption both in Doctrine and Manners, may have something that's good and allowable; and he that retains that, is not therefore guilty of her corruption, nor espouses her Errors. Your Idolatry is one thing, and your Orders are another. The Jews did take many good things from the Heathens, and the Christians many commendable things from the Jews; but that neither made the Jews approve of the Heathenish Worship, nor the Christians allow of the Jewish Errors. We are not so disingenuous, as to make the breach between  
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you and us wider than needs. So far as you go with Scripture and true Antiquity, we hold with you ; where you contradict both, we cannot with a safe Conscience bear you company. He that sees a Pearl lye among a great deal of Trash, if he take the Pearl, is not therefore obliged to take the Rubbish too ; and if we have derived our Orders from you, that infers no necessity that we must therefore consent to your Notorious Deprivations of the antient Simplicity of the Gospel. The Christians heretofore, that approved of the Baptism of the Donatists, did not therefore presently acknowledge the Truth of their Opinions ; and he that should take a good custom from the Turks, cannot be therefore said to approve of all things that are in the *Alcoran*.

*Madam,* There is nothing more easie than to cavil at the most prudent Action in the World, especially where People take a slight survey of things, and do not with Seriousness and Deliberation weigh the Circumstances of the Fact, and do not examine the inside as well as the outside ; and I must confess, upon the best Examination of your Actions and

Proceedings in this Revolt to the Church of *Rome*, you never took the right way to be satisfied ; for instead of pondering the Arguments and Motives of our Departure from the Church of *Rome*, and of the Reasons we alledge for our Church and Doctrine ; you made it your chief Imployment to read their Books, and believed what they said to be Oracles, for no other Reason but because they talked with greater Arrogance and Confidence. If you say, that you could not judge of Arguments having never been bred a Scholar, I would but ask you how you durst change your Religion then ? Did you change it without reason and without ground ? and if you are not able to weigh the strength of Arguments, how can you be sure that you are in the true Church at this time ? It is not talk, but Arguments that must demonstrate the Truth of a Religion ; and if you have not sufficiently weighed the Arguments of both sides, it is a thousand to one you may still be in the wrong way ; and you know not but you may be as much out now, as you were formerly. Madam, so great a thing as the change of your Religion, upon which no less

less than Eternity depends, might justly have challenged some years study, before you had resolved upon it. To do a thing of this nature upon so slight a Survey, consider whether it doth not argue Rashness and Weakness, rather than Piety and Devotion. To leave a Religion you have been bred and born in, a Religion founded upon the Word of God, and which you had liberty to examine by the Scripture, upon reading a Popish Book or two, without diving to the bottom of the several Controversies, without reflecting on the Importance of the Points in question, without studying a considerable time which Religion comes nearest to Scripture, and which goes farthest off; is such an Argument of Impatience, that you only seem to have yielded to a dangerous Temptation of the Devil. If the Controversies between the Church of *Rome* and us, are so intricate, as you say, and above your capacity to dive into them, you have then run over to that Church in the dark, and have as little reason to be satisfied with your Proceedings, as you believe you have with our way of Worship. You plead, that you have been sitting up whole  
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Nights, and weeping and praying, that God would discover to you which is the true way to Salvation, and from that time forward you found Inclinations to go over to that Church; and is this a sufficient Argument to justify your Forwardness? When you had already begun to doubt, whether our Church were a true Church or no, because you found not that Satisfaction in it your sickly Desires wanted; it was then an easie matter to give ear to confident People, that magisterially and peremptorily assured you, that you would find Satisfaction in their Church; and being fed with this hope, your Inclinations to that Church grew stronger every day, as our Mother *Eve*, the hopes of being like God, suggested to her by the Serpent, did egg and spur her on to eat of the fatal Tree.

We do not forbid People to pray to God, to lead or direct them into the right way: (though sometimes it may be a perfect tempting of God, when People are in the right way, to desire God to discover to them, by a sign of their own choice, whether they are in it or no.) But them, if we pray to God to direct

us,



us, we must not neglect the means God hath appointed in order to our Satisfaction, but must compare Scripture with Scripture, and Books with Books, and Arguments with Arguments; and search which Religion agrees most with the Doctrines and Practices of Christ and his Apostles; and as the Noble *Berrheans* did, examine all the Doctrines obtruded to our Belief, by the Scripture; and doing thus, and continuing this search, and these Prayers together, no doubt but God in his own good time, will answer us and direct us. But to pray to God to direct us, and not to use the means, in the use of which he hath promised to direct us, we do in a manner mock him, or desire him to work a Miracle for us, or to vouchsafe us some extraordinary Revelation, when we have *Moses* and the Prophets, and may hear them. And I am confident, had you joyned this way with your Prayer, examined the Doctrines of the Church of *Rome*, and compared them with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, seen whether there be any thing like it in the Bible, and searched whether Christ and his Apostles ever taught such Doctrines,  
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and done all this, not slightly, but feriously and solidly, it's impossible you could ever have turned Papist; for if our Gospel be true, that Religion can never be true, for there is nothing in the World can run more counter to the Gospel, than the Doctrines of that Church, wherein we differ from them, and they had need put the Bible among prohibited Books; for should the People have liberty freely to peruse it, the Church of *Rome* would grow very thin and despicable.

I am sensible your Priests find fault with our Translation of the Bible, and cry out, that there are great defects in it; but when they talk so, they had need talk to Women, not to Men of Learning, and that understand Greek and Hebrew, the Languages in which the Word was originally written. The Honesty of our Translators appears sufficiently from hence, because if any Sentence in the Bible be capable of a double Sense, they express the one in the Text, and the other in the Margin; and where they do but in the least vary from the Original, they either discover it by the Italick Character, or give you notice of  
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it in the Margin, than which there can be nothing more honest. And let any Papist of you all shew us, wherein any thing in our Bibles is ill translated out of Malice, or Design, or expressed in words, which the Original will not bear.

If we examine Translations by the Original, then sure I am, there is few Translations go further from it, than the Vulgar Latin, or the Rhemist Testament, as were an easie matter to prove, if I intended more than a Letter.

You are much taken with their Mortifications and Penances, which you say we have not in our Church: But it's a sign, Madam, you did not rightly understand our Religion: We are so far from condemning Mortification and Severity of Life, that we do commend it, provided it be in order to subdue the body of Sin, and to raise our selves to a greater pitch of Vertue; provided these Severities be separated from all opinion of Merit, and from an opinion of their being satisfactory, and expiatory, and used only as helps, to work in us a perfect Detestation of Sin. And I will assure you there are more in the Church of *England*, that use Severities in this  
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humble holy way, than you are aware of.

We indeed do not ordinarily inflict them on all persons, because we know not there Constitution, nor what their nature will bear, nor have we any command for it in the Word of God ; but these things we leave to every Man's Discretion, urging, that where Sins require stronger Remedies, there Men ought to make use of them ; and if their Corruptions will not be gone by Reasonings and Arguments, that there they must inflict Mulcts and Penalties on themselves to drive the Unclean Spirit out. Though I must say still, that Religious Severities and Austerities are not certain signs of a true Religion ; for Heathens do use them as much as Christians, nay more than Christians, witness the *Brahmanes* in the *Indies*, and the Religious *Pagans* dispersed through all the Eastern parts ; and if you conclude, that therefore the Church of *Rome* must be in the right, because they inflict great Penances and Severities, and make daily use of them, I am afraid you only forbear turning Turk or Heathen, because you never saw their far greater Severities

ties in Religion, than the Church of *Rome* can boast of: But still the Protestant Church hath not the real Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Sacrament, which the Church of *Rome* hath: And are you sure the Church of *Rome* hath it? I am perswaded you did never taste it, nor see it, nor feel it, nor smell it, and how do you know it? What? because the Priests of that Church do tell you so? No, say you, it is because Christ saith in expresse terms, *this is my Body*. And here, I confess, I stand amazed, that Men, with Learning and Reason about them, can sink into an opinion so contradictory, that, if all the consequences of it be considered, there is nothing in nature can be more absurd, or irrational; and the Church of *Rome* had need oblige Men to deny both their Reason and Senses, to believe a Transubstantiation. Here indeed a Faith is necessary strong enough to remove Mountains; and though never any Miracles were wrought, but were wrought on purpose to convince our Senses, yet here we must believe one which neither Sense nor Reason can discover. When Christ gave the Sacrament to his Disciples,

saith

saith the Apostle, *1 Corinth. II. 24. He brake the Bread, and said, Take eat, this is my Body, which is broken for you.* It is a wonderful thing, that the word *is*, in the first Sentence, *this is my Body*, should have a literal Sense, and in the very next Sentence, pronounced with the same breath, cannot admit of a literal Sense; for the word *is*, in the second Sentence must necessarily stand for *shall be*, because Christ's Body, when he gave the Bread, was not yet broken: If it will not admit of a literal Sense in the very next Sentence, because of the Absurdity that would follow, that Christ was crucified, before he was crucified; why should we understand it in the first Sentence literally, when the Absurdity is far greater? Nay, that the word *is* should not be capable of being understood literally in the second essential part of the Sacrament, *This Cup is the New Testament*; that here I say it should import, and can import nothing else, but signifies, or *is a sign of the New Testament*; and yet must not be understood so in the first part of the Sacrament, is a thing we cannot comprehend: And when the Apostle, speaking of Lord's Supper or Eucha-

Eucharist, 1 Cor. 10. 16. The Cup of Blessing which we bless, *is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ?* and the Bread which we break, *is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?* Let the rigidest Papist, that hath not quite banished his Reason, tell me, how he will make Sense of the word *is* here, except he understand it figuratively; most certainly it cannot be understood literally; for the Cup is not that Communion, but is a sign of it: One would admire, how Men can be so obstinate in a thing as clear as the Sun; and you might as well conclude, that Christ is a Door made of Boards and Nails, because the Scripture saith, he is a Door; and that he is a real Vine with green Leaves and Grapes about him, because the Scripture saith he *is* a Vine. But suppose the word *is* in these words, *This is my Body*, must be understood literally, how doth this make for Transubstantiation? Are the words *is*, and *is transubstantiated*, all one? A thing may be said to *be* a thousand ways, and yet without Transubstantiation; so that, if by the word *is* you understand Transubstantiation, you your selves must go from the literal sense, and as-

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sume a sense, which is not expressed in that saying. All the Jews are so well versed in the sense of Sacramental Expressions, that by the word *is* they understand nothing, but *signifies* or *represents*; and therefore it's a horrid shame, that Christians, meerly for fear of being laughed at, for departing from an absurd opinion, and losing the credit of a pretended Infallibility, should make themselves ignorant in that, which the meanest Jew, even before the Gospel, understood without a Teacher; for we may confidently believe, that no Jew, before Christ's time, was so sottish to think, when it's said, *the flesh is the Passover*, *Exod. 12. 11.* that the Flesh or Blood was really the Passover, but only a sign and representation of it, or a token to them, as *Moses* calls it, *ver. 13.* I will not here put you in mind of the strange Absurdities that must follow from this Doctrine of Transubstantiation, *viz.* that Christ, when he did eat and drink in this Sacrament, must have eaten his own Flesh, and that the Apostles must have eaten his Body, while he was at the Table with them, and before it was crucified, &c. I could tell you, that



that this Doctrine is against the great Article of our Faith, that Christ is ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth at the Right hand of God until the day of Judgment.

That it is against the Nature of a real Body to be in a thousand places at once. And that from hence it must follow, that the Body and Blood of Christ is capable of being devoured by Vermin, capable of being poisoned, and instead of giving life may be so order'd, that it shall kill and murther; witness *Victor* the third, Pope of *Rome*, and *Henry* the VIIth. Emperour, who were poisoned in the Sacrament, not to mention a thousand more of such Monstrous consequences: But since, Madam, you do insist so much upon that place of Scripture, *John 6. 53. Except you eat my flesh and drink my blood you have no life in you.* I'll but briefly shew you, how ill a Logician you are, to conclude that this is spoke of the Sacrament, or to conclude that these words infer a Corporal manducation of Christ's real Body and Blood: if they be meant of the Eucharist, it will necessarily follow, that Christ oblig'd the Jews, and his hearers to come

to the Sacrament at the time he spake these words, for he speaks of their present eating and drinking, (*Except ye eat, &c.*) But this he could not possibly do, for the Sacrament of his Body and Blood was not instituted till at least a whole twelve months after, nor did any of his disciples, at that time, dream of any such thing, as his dying and being crucified, nor doth Christ speak the least word of it in the whole Chapter, which he must necessarily have done, if he had intended the Sacrament by it, which is all together founded in his Crucifixion. For this Sermon of Christ, concerning eating and drinking his flesh and blood, was delivered just about the Feast of the Passover, *ver. 4.* After which feast, as it is said, *John 7. 1, 2.* the Jews celebrated the feast of Tabernacles, and after this they kept another feast of the Passover, the last, which Christ was at, which was no less than a twelve month after, *John 11. 55. John 12. 21.* So that the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, not being instituted before the last Passover, as all the Evangelists agree, it was not possible, that either the believing Jews, or the Apostles could under-

understand it of the Sacrament (and I suppose Christ intended to be understood) because there was no such thing as yet instituted. Besides, it is impossible, that it can be understood of the Sacramental eating and drinking of the Body and Blood of Christ, for without this eating and drinking there is no Salvation to be had, as it is said, *Joh. 6. 53, 54.* and if it were to be understood of the Eucharist, we must exclude all Christians from Salvation, that are not in a capacity, nor in a possibility of receiving it, which, I am sure, your own Church will not do.

And that these words of Christ cannot possibly be understood of a Corporal eating Christ's flesh, and drinking, his Blood, but must be understood of a Spiritual eating and drinking, that is, believing in him, and obeying him, and hoping for pardon through his Death, which is the spiritual Food of the Soul, is evident from the *54th.* and *56th.* Verse, where every one that eats of his Flesh, and drinks of his Blood, is said to have actually eternal life in him, and Christ dwelling in him, and he dwelling in Christ. That is, Christ loves him with

a love of complacency, he is a Child of God, and beloved of him, and an Heir of Heaven ; but since wicked men come to the Sacrament, not only in our Church, but even in the Church of *Rome*, it would follow, if a corporal eating were understood, that wicked men, eating Christ's Body, and drinking his Blood, have Eternal life in them, and that Christ dwells in them, and that they are true Children of God, and Heirs of Heaven, contrary to the unanimous Consent of the Holy Prophets and Apostles, who call wicked men Children of the Devil, and blinded by the Devil, the God of the World, and Heirs of Damnation. And indeed it is strange, that people should contend for this corporal and sensual eating of Christ's Flesh, and drinking his Blood, when Christ himself saith, *v. 63.* That the flesh profiteth nothing, and that this eating and drinking must be understood spiritually, *i. e.* of Spiritual eating and drinking, which is believing, as it is said, *v. 64.*

You see, Madam, what it is not to make use of your own reason, but to enslave it to the Faith of a Church, which loves to act in the Dark, and would have

have her Children *Colliers*, and believe what the Church believes, and know little more than the great Mystery of an *Ave Maria*, or a Rosary.

Time was, when you were pleased to tell our Ministers, that though you were gone over to the Church of *Rome*, yet you had Liberty not to pray to Saints, nor to fall down before Images, that was not thought necessary by the for Church of *Rome*, which only recommends praying to Saints, and Veneration of Relicks and Images, as a thing useful, and which men have received much benefit by. And indeed I remember, I was told, you thought, that praying to Saints was a kind of Idolatry, and therefore were glad they would excuse you from that Worship; but since, I hear, that you are grown as devout a Worshipper of Saints, and peculiarly of the Virgin *Mary*, and do prostrate yourself before them, as much as the most tractable Papist in the World. I confess, I did smell a Rat at first, when your Priests assured you, that Invocation of Saints was not a thing commanded but recommended as useful, and was then confident that before a year came

to an end, for all these soft Expressions and Dispensations with your Omission of this Worship, they would perswade you to that Worship, which then you thought unlawful: My Prophecy is come to pass, and the Pill, which seemed very bitter at first, is swallowed, and become sweeter than Honey, and look'd upon as an excellent Medicine. And this, I must needs say, is more than you could have in our Church. But this is our Comfort, that the more ingenuous Men of the Church of *Rome* confess, that this praying to Saints or Angels was not heard of, or used in the Christian Church, for the first Three hundred years after Christ: And if the Christian Church, for the first Three hundred years, did not think it useful at all, it is a strange Degeneration from their Principles, to press it now as useful: Certainly, if God had thought this Invocation so useful, as your Church pretends it is, He would not have so peremptorily commanded, *Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* Psal. 50. 15. and it's probable the Apostles, in prescribing so many useful things of far less concern,

cern, would not have left us in the dark as to the mighty usefulness of this Invocation; especially, when they had occasion to mention the Spirits of men made perfect, and did so often converse with Angels. The Angel, *Revel.* 22. 8, 9. thought it a very useless thing, and would not admit of so much as a Religious prostration of the Evangelist before him, because it look'd like Sacrilege, and robbing God of his due.

But since your Church in this Adoration takes Pattern so much by the Courts of Princes, give me leave to suggest to you, how you think, a Sovereign Prince would take it, if a Subject should give any of his Servants the Title of Majesty, or any other Title, which properly belongs to him. There are few Titles, that God hath, and inspired Men have given to him, but you give them to the Blessed Virgin, and though, when you are charg'd with it, you fall to Distinctions, and turn, and wind your selves to get out, yet that shews only a bad cause, because it requires so much artifice and cunning to defend it: But, alas! it must be Children, that are perswaded and coaxed to believe,

believe, that the Church of *Rome* only counts it useful not necessary, when it is] well known, that the generality of [that Communion pray to Saints more than to God (which in the Scripture phrase is honouring the Creature more than the Creator) and they never leave that Person, that goes over to them, till they have brought him to that Worship of Saints and Angels.

Its pretty to hear these Men talk, that it is only recommended as useful, when the Bishops and Preachers of that Church are enjoyned, and take their Oath upon't, to commend this Invocation to the People, as profitable; and the People are obliged to hearken to their Priests in all things; so that though a Man at first may think this Invocation not necessary, upon the account of its being only useful, yet from that other Obligation he hath to obey the Priest in all spiritual things, it becomes necessary: But from this scruple we are delivered, Madam, by the Confession of Faith, which the Roman Catechism doth prescribe, for there it is, that it is not only useful, but that we ought to pray unto Saints, and indeed should any  
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Man live in that Communion, and omit it, he would soon be looked upon as prophane, and but a half Convert to their Church ; they would soon let him know their Displeasure, and either fright or flatter him into Conformity. And is this the Worship, Madam, which Christ and his Apostles have enjoyned the World? Are not you afraid of doing things, that do so nearly border upon robbing God of his honour and glory? Idolatry is a frightful word, and you do not love to hear it, and therefore I will trouble you with it as little as I can. But when God hath commanded you to come to him directly, without mentioning the Intercession of Saints and Angels, how dares your Church of her own head, bring in a Worship so dangerous? who should prescribe the way how God is to be worshipped, but God himself? And if God requires you to address your self to him without any other Mediator, but Christ Jesus, Have not you just reason to be afraid, that God will reject your Prayers, which are addressed to Saints, as Mediators, contrary to his order and injunction? What Kings suffer  
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here on Earth, in letting their Subjects address themselves by their Servants to them, can be no example here, for God, as he intends not to regulate his Court by the Court of Princes, so we know it is against his Order, to go to his Servants, when we are commanded to come directly to him, and it is such a voluntary humility as deprives us of our Reward, as the Apostles expressly tells us, *Coloss. 2. 18.* God knew well enough if men addressed themselves to his Servants, to have access to him, something of the Worship due to him would stick by the way, and rest upon his Servants to his Dishonour and Disparagement, and therefore he mentioned nothing of this mediate Address. Its true, we desire our Neighbours here on Earth to pray for us, but for that we have a Command; for the Invocation of Saints departed we have none, and in vain do they worship me (saith God) teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of men, *Mat. 15. 9.* But besides, when you desire your living Neighbours to pray for you, I hope you do not fall down upon your knees to them, nor use the same Zeal and Devotion to them,

them, as you do to God, and for whole hours together, as you do to Saints departed. But why will you blind your self in a thing which your own Practice contradicts you in, you know you do not only pray to Saints departed to pray for you, but you do many times, without making any mention of their Prayers for you, beg of them, with the same reverence, and prostrations you use to God, to deliver you from all evil, and consequently you beg the same Blessings of them you beg of God. And it is but a weak excuse to say, that you intend by those Prayers nothing else, but that by their Intercession they may get those Blessings for you, for you go contrary to the nature of things, and whereas words ordinarily are Interpreters of the mind, you make your minds Interpreters of your Words and Actions, which is a strange evasion, and if such a thing be intended, why do you lay a snare before the Common sort of People? who, being ordered to pray to Saints for such and such Blessings, know nothing to the contrary, but that they are able to dispence those Blessings to them, and thus commit Idolatry by your willful connivance,

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whose Blood will certainly be required at your Church-mens hands one day. Examine but your Prayers to the Virgin *Mary* in your own Manuels, when you have prayed to her, and begged of her all that you can pray of God for, you add a word or two of her Intercession, which in good truth is nothing but a blind, that you may not be said to commit down right Idolatry. You know those Prayers to the Virgin *Mary*, which in the Latine, and I think in the English Manual too, are ordered to be said to the Virgin, Morning and Evening. The one,

*O my Lady, Holy Mary, I commend my self, my Soul and Body to thy blessed Care and singular Custody, and to the bosome of thy mercy this day, and every day, and in the hour of my going out of the World. All my hope, and all my comfort, all my afflictions and miseries, my life, my end I commit unto thee (speak seriously what can you say more to God) that by thy most Holy Intercession, and by thy merits, all my Words and Actions may be directed and disposed according to thine, and thy Sons Will, Amen.*

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Where it's worth noting, that first you do put as much trust in the Virgin as you do in God ; and then afterwards, to make these harsh Expressions softer, you desire her to interceed for you, that your Works may be directed according to Christ's Will, nay and her own, as if she were a Lawgiver too ? Then follows, *Maria Mater Gratia, &c.* O Mary, Mother of Grace, Mother of Mercy, protect us from the Enemy, and receive us in the hour of Death ; which St. Stephen thought was fitter to be said to Christ when he cried, *Lord Jesu receive my Spirit.* Then follows the Evening Prayer to the Virgin Mary ; O Mary, Mother of God, and gracious Virgin, the true Comforter of all distressed Creatures that call upon thee (this Epithete by the way the Scripture gives to the Holy Ghost) by that great Joy whereby thou wast comforted, when thou didst know that Jesus Christ was risen the third day from the Dead impassible, be thou the Comforter of my Soul ; and by the same, who is thine and God's only Son, in the last day, when with Body and Soul I shall rise again, and give an account of all my Actions, do thou vouchsafe to help me, that I may escape the Sentence of perpetual Damnation,

*nation by thee Pious Mother and Virgin, and may come happily with all the Elect of God to Eternal Joys, Amen. Then follows, Under thy Protection we flee, Holy Mother of God, despise not our Prayer in our Necessities, but deliver us from all dangers always, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Not to mention any more Prayers of this nature, whereof there is a vast number.*

If God be a God jealous of his Glory, how can he like and approve of such doings? It's true, the Honour done to his Servants is done to him; but then it must be such Honour, as they are capable to receive; so to honour them, as to give them the Epithetes and Titles which the Scripture gives to none but God; so to honour them, as to use in your Prayers to them the same outward Prostrations, that you use to God, when you pray to him; so to honour them, as to spend more time in your Addresses to them than you do in Supplications to God, as is evident from your Rosary; so to honour them, as to say more Prayers to them than to Christ; so to honour them, as to joyn their Merits with Christ's Merits: This is an Honour which,

which, I believe, will oblige God to say one day, *Who hath required these things at your hands?* And how unlike the Worship of the true God is that Veneration you express to the Images and Pictures of Saints, and to the Relicks? How unlike that plain and simple Worship which the Gospel enjoyns? One would think it should a little startle you to see, that your Church is afraid to let the Second Commandment be known to the People; you know they leave it out in their Primers and Catechisms; or if they mention it, they do so mince it, that one sees plainly they are afraid the People should see the contrariety of their Worship to the express Word of God. In the beginning of the Reformation, the very sight of this Commandment made People run away from the Church of *Rome* as much as any thing: Indeed to consider the general terms God uses there, *Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven Image, &c.* Thou shalt not only not *Worship them*, but *not so much as fall down before them*; would make a Person, that is not taken more with the Golden Legends than with Scripture, afraid of Prostrations before

fore Images, upon the account of Devotion: It is not all your plea, that you do not terminate your Worship on the Image, but on the Person represented by the Image, that will excuse you at the great tribunal; for not to mention, that in the same manner the Heathen used to defend their grossest Idolatry, and that you are forced to borrow their very Arguments; your own Authors do confess, that the common People are apt to pay Adoration, and do pay Adoration to the Images themselves, and why will you lay such a Stumbling-block before the People?

Much might be said of the Adoration you pay to the consecrated Host: You confess, that the Worship you give to it, is the same Worship you give to God: What if that Wafer should not be turned into the Body and Blood of Christ? What if it should remain as very a Wafer, as it was before Consecration? What if it should not be God, as you have all the Demonstration that Sense or Reason can give you, that it is not changed into another Substance? What monstrous Idolatry would this be? Ay, but we believe it to be God: Why, Madam,  
doth



doth your Belief that such a thing is God, or Christ, excuse you from Idolatry? Should you believe a Stone to be God, and adore it, might not you justly be charged with Idolatry? You look upon the Heathens as Idolaters, because they adore the Sun: Ay, but they believe that Sun to be God; and how then, according to your plea, can they be Idolaters? If there be such a Transubstantiation in the Sacrament, as you fancy, and an Adoration of the Hoste so very necessary, what's the reason the Apostles of our Lord, that saw Christ before their eyes, (only could not believe that there were two Christs, one sitting at the Table, the other reached out to them:) What's the reason, I say, that they sate still, and paid no Adoration to the Bread, which according to you was transubstantiated into Christ? If they did not adore it, what a Presumption is it in you to give the highest Worship to the consecrated Bread upon a pretence that that Bread is God, under the accidents of Bread? But of this I have said enough before, and could you but find time to read what our Authors have written upon this Subject, it could be nothing

but hardness of Heart, and Resolution to be blind, could keep you in a Church, that fills your Head with Doctrines contrary to the nature of a Sacrament, contrary to all that *Moses*, and the *Prophets*, say, and all sound *Philosophers* have said.

I will not say any thing here of your strange unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass, a thing unheard of in the purer Ages of Christianity, and which the Scripture is so great a stranger to, that one would wonder how Mankind came to light upon the notion. Nor of your Doctrine of Merits, because I find your Priests have two strings to their bow, and tell the People one thing, and their Adversaries, when they dispute with them, another; affirm and deny it as they see occasion, and necessity requires. Only one thing I must needs take notice of before I take my leave, and that is the Gigantick Argument, that some of your Gentlemen boast of, and which strikes all Protestants dead at the first hearing of it. If there be any thing true, this must be true, that there is a God; if there be a God, there must be a true Religion; if there be a true Religion, there must

must be a true revealed Religion ; if there be a true revealed Religion, the Christian Religion must be that true revealed Religion ; and if the Christian Religion be true, then the Religion of the Church of *Rome* must be true ; for the Argument that proves the Christian Religion to be true, proves the Religion of the Church of *Rome* to be true, which is this, Either the Christian Religion was propagated without Miracles, or by Miracles ; if by Miracles, then it must be Divine ; if without Miracles, then it is the greatest Miracle, that a Religion, so contrary to Flesh and Blood, should prevail with sensual Men. The same, say they, is true of the Religion of the Church of *Rome*. For if it be propagated by Miracles, it must be Divine ; if without Miracles, it must be so much more, because it prescribes things contrary to Flesh and Blood, as Penances, Austerities, &c. and thousands of People do embrace it. It will not make my self merry here in a thing so serious, else I could have told you, that I have heard of an Argument, when I was at School, somewhat like this ; *He that drinks well, sleeps well ; he that sleeps well, commits no*  
I 3
Sin ;

*Sin ; he that commits no Sin, will be saved :* therefore he that drinks well will be saved. But I forbear ; And as to the aforesaid Argument, whereby one of your Priests, that hath printed it, thinks to end all Controversies, I will say no more but this. First, that as there is no Christian but must readily confess, that the Miracles Christ and his Apostles wrought, were a Confirmation of the Divinity of their Doctrine ; so there is no Man of any brains can admit of the other part of the *dilemma* as universally true, that a Religion that goes against Flesh and Blood, if propagated without Miracles, must therefore be necessarily Divine. Secondly, that so far as the Religion of the Church of *Rome* agrees with the truly Christian Religion, so far it is undoubtedly true ; and it will naturally follow, that if the Christian Religion be true, the Religion of the Church of *Rome*, so far as it agrees with the Christian Religion, must needs be true. And the same may be said of the Protestant Religion ; but that the Roman Religion must therefore be true, where it goes away, and differs from the truly Christian Religion, revealed to us in the Gospel,

Gospel, is a consequence which none but Children can approve of. Thirdly, with this Argument a Man might prove the Divinity of almost any Religion in the World: He that is no stranger to History, must needs know what Severities, what Austerities of Life the *Brachmans*, or the Heathen *Friers* in the *Indies*, do both prescribe and practice, and what Profelites they make, and how full the Kingdom of the great *Mogul* is of them; how some wallow in Aches day and night, how others go charged with heavy Iron Chaines all their days; how others stand upright upon their Leggs for whole Weeks together, &c. How in *Japan*, and other places of the *Indies*, the Priests perswade the People to fast themselves to death, to go long Pilgrimages, to give all they have to the Priests, to throw themselves down from steep Rocks, and break their Necks, and all to arrive the sooner to the Happiness of another World, &c. I think there cannot be things more contrary to Flesh and Blood, than these, and yet we see these Doctrines are propagated daily without any force of Arms, only by Example and Perswasion, to be sure without any Miracle; but, I hope,

that doth not prove their Religion to be Divine. It's a dictate of the light of Nature, that the way to Heaven is straight, and therefore People that are religiously inclined, are easily won over to those Men, whom they see exercise such Severities upon themselves.

To conclude, Madam, when all is done, what the true Church is, must be tried by the Writings of the Evangelists and Apostles. We see, that even in the Apostles days, Corruptions crept into the Church, witness the Churches of *Corinth*, *Galatia*, and *Colosse*, &c. and the Simplicity of the Gospel began even then to be perverted, and mingled with idle and foolish Opinions and Practices; and therefore we must needs think, that after the Apostles decease, the Church of Christ was subject to the same fate; so that if there be any Standard or Touchstone left, whereby the Truth and Sincerity of a Church can be tried, (and we must needs think so well of God's Providence that he would not leave his Church without some Rule to rectifie their Errors by, in case she should be infected with any) it must be the Primitive Institution of the Christian Religion; and that Church, as I said before,

fore, which teaches things that approach nearest to that Primitive Institution, must be the true Church.

And, Madam, do but once more for your Souls sake, and for your Salvations sake, compare the Doctrines and Practices of the Church of *Rome*, with the Doctrines and Practices of the Gospel, the Fountain of Christianity, and try whether you can find there the Doctrines of *Communion under one kind*, of *publick Prayers in a Tongue unknown to the People*, of *Purgatory*, of *the Mass*, of *Transubstantiation*, of *the Church of Rome's Supremacy and Infallibility*, of *Worshipping and Adoring the Virgin Mary*, and *Praying to Saints*, of *Veneration of Relicks and Images*, of *Adoration of the Host*, &c. Do not force any places of Scripture, and try whether you can make sense of any of these Doctrines by Scripture: View the stream of the Gospel, and search whether there be any thing like these Doctrines in it: Why will you make your Reason a Slave to your Priests magisterial Sentences? How can you answer it to God, that you did not improve your Reason more? What have you your Reason for, but to judge what is agreeable to the Word

Word of God, and what is not? Is not this acting like a Creature void of Reason, to be guided altogether by what a few blind Guides say to you, without enquiring at *the Law and Testimony*, whether things are so as they say or no? Wonderful Stupidity! I stand amazed at it. It is not all the seeming Holiness of those Priests you converse withal, that make the Church you are in, a true Church. There is no Sect in the World, but when they are under a Cloud, Necessity, and the Discouragement they are under, and their desire to make Profelites, makes them outwardly Religious. There may be, and no doubt are zealous and outwardly pious Men in all Religions in the World; but that doth not make every Religion true and divine. An outward shew of Piety is the only way of propagating any Religion. The Devil himself could not propagate Heathenism and Idolatry, but by the pretended Zeal, and Piety, and Abstinence, and Mortification of *Apollonius Tyaneus*; who yet by the confession of the whole Christian World, was no better than a Wizard and Conjuror. I make no application to any particular Priest in the Church



Church of *Rome*: I do not deny but Men may be in great Errors, and be very zealous for their Errors, and seemingly very pious in their Zeal; and when their Errors are not very willful, and destroy not the true Worship of God, for ought I know, they may find Mercy in the day of our Lord. I grant there is a great shew of outward Piety in the Church of *Rome*, very dazling and very moving; but the great danger lies here, that the Worship they give to God with one hand, they strike and pull down with the other: I know too well the practice of their Churches; and a Heathen, that should come into their Temples beyond Sea, would verily believe that they worship a Multiplicity of Gods as well as he, whatever their Pretensions may be to the contrary: It is not what People say, so much as what they do, that God takes notice of; and though you should Ten thousand times protest, that you worship and adore God alone, yet while God sees you adore the Virgin *Mary*, with as great Zeal and Reverence as you do him, pray to her oftner than you do to him, make as many bows to her, and other Saints, as you do to him, and other things of that nature,

nature, how can he believe you? Religion is a thing that will not bear Jest and Hypocrisie; God will not be put off with Contradictions between Speeches and Practices.

Madam, I do from my Heart pitty you, and as it might be the weakness of your Judgment, that might lead you into this Erroneous Church, so I beseech you, for Christ's sake, to return to the Church you have rashly left, where you cannot run a hazard if you will but follow the plain Doctrines of the Gospel, besides which we preach nothing, and enjoin nothing as necessary to Salvation. Should these Intreaties and Beseechings be alledged against you in the last day, as things which you have, contrary to Reason, refused and slighted, how dreadful would your Condition be? I have discharged my Duty, and given you warning; I would not have your Guilt lie at my Door, and therefore have let you know my real Thoughts and Sentiments concerning your Condition, and the Church you are in. The Great God of Heaven open your Eyes, that you may see and fear.

Time was when you would have believed

lieved us as much as you do now the  
 Priests of the Church of *Rome*. It's  
 strange, that now they should speak no-  
 thing but Truths, and we nothing but  
 Falshood. Do you think we do not un-  
 derstand the Scriptures, and Fathers, and  
 Antiquity, as well as they? And can we  
 all be so besotted with Interest and Pas-  
 sion that none of us should yield to the  
 dictates of their Church, if we could pre-  
 vail with our Sense and Reason to be-  
 lieve, that the things wherein they differ  
 from us were agreeable to the Gospel?  
 Sure we have a great many Men among  
 us that are great Lovers of Peace, and  
 would be glad that the whole Christian  
 World were agreed; and would these  
 Men stand out against that Union, if it  
 could be done with a safe Conscience?  
 Certainly we have Men as learned among  
 us, as ever the Sun did shine upon; nay  
 the Church of *Rome* hath at this day few  
 Men to equal ours for Learning and  
 Knowledge. And would all our Learned  
 Men be so stubborn and obstinate, as not  
 to agree with the Church of *Rome*, if  
 they did not see plainly, that *there is*  
*Death in that Pot*; and that the Errors  
 in that Church cannot be subscribed to  
 without

without hazarding the Welfare of their Souls? I will but use your own Argument, when you went over to the Church of *Rome*, and were perswaded by the Earnestness of her Priests to yield to their Reasonings, what pleasure can we take in promoting your Damnation? What can be our Interest in deceiving you? You used that Argument on their side, why will you not use it on our side? Judge you, whither we, that have the Gospel on our side for what we teach are not in a safer way, than that Church which for all the new Doctrines they have added to the Old Creeds, are forced to run to the broken Cisterns of Tradition; and I know not what Fathers whose Writings they know not whether they be genuine or no? As you are now, you live in wilful opposition to the Doctrine and Precepts of the Gospel, and O remember what *St. Paul* doth say *2 Thess. 1. 7, 8. That the Lord Jesus will ere long come down from Heaven with his Holy Angels to take Vengeance on them who have disobeyed the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Once more therefore charge you before Almighty God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, to repent of your Error

Errors, and to return to the bosom of that Church, in which you received your Life and Being, and the Principles of Religion and Christianity. But if all this seem to you no more but Bugbears, I have delivered my own Soul, and should be sorry that this Discourse should stand as a Witness against you in the Last day, which God knows was only intended as a Motive to draw you back to that Fold from which you have wandered and gone astray. I am,

Madam,

*Your Faithful Friend to serve you,*

Feb. 17.  
1677.

A. H.

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POST.

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## POSTSCRIPT.

*Madam,*

**A**S in the publishing of this Letter I had no other design, but to prevent the fall of others into the like dangers, so I have particularly insisted on those motives, which have of late tempted some persons to go over to the Roman Church, and though I have represented these motives as yours, yet in this I have been so far from doing any thing against the Laws of private Discourse, or Friendship, or Acquaintance, that I have only touch'd upon the common stumbling-blocks, which make unwary people joyn themselves to that Church; Blocks, which might easily be removed, if Men or Women would but give themselves leave to think, and would prefer the solid Dictates of their reason before the Suggestions of their soft, and sickly Passions. One thing I had almost forgot, and which indeed is the great Bug-bear, whereby your Church-men fright their people from running over  
to

to us, and that is, that our Church began but about an hundred and fifty years ago, that *Luther* and *Zwinglius* were the Authors of it, and that we had no Church before; pittiful shifts indeed to keep people from seeing the Sun at Noon. Suppose our Religion did but begin then, why, must people be always in an Error? Must they never reform when they have done amiss? if there were monstrous Errors in the Church of *Rome*, which the aforesaid Persons saw would be the Death of Christianity, and which they could not subscribe to without debauching their Reason, or wronging both their own and other Mens Consciences, was it not rational, they should protest against such things, to give their fellow Christians warning? When the House is on fire, would you have no body awake to alarm the Neighbours to look to themselves? did they see so many thousand Men ready to be drown'd, and would you have had them hold their Tongues, and barbarously suffered them all to be drown'd? Did they see the Christian Religion like to be swallow'd up by Darkness and Ignorance, and was it not time to rouse the slum-

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bring

bering World? But however, that these Men were the first broachers of our Religion, is notoriously false: First, because long before them, there were Men that lived in the external Communion of the Church of *Rome*, but dislik'd the Errors, as they crept in, and grew dangerous, and though they were overaw'd and silenc'd many times by the higher Powers of the Roman Court, yet they both detested those Corruptions, and as they had opportunity, protested against them, as were an easie matter to prove from age to age, if it had not been done already over and over by Divines of our Church, so that though these Men, that lived long before *Luther*, and whom God still rais'd to vindicate his Truth, as it grew more and more polluted, were not call'd Protestants by the People, yet in effect they were so, and consequently there were Protestants many years before *Luther* and *Zwinglius*: And though they were not suffered by the Ignorant, and imperious Ecclesiastical Powers, to meet and assemble themselves in publick, yet they made a Church, as much as the followers of Holy *Athanasius* did, when the whole  
World



World was turned *Arian*; as much as *Elijah*, and those seven thousand, the Oracle mentioned, made a Church; when the whole Country was over-run with Idolaters. These seven thousand we read lay hid, and durst not appear in publick, being oppress'd by the Idolatrous powers, that sat at the Stern, and thought there was no good fishing but in troubled waters. And indeed in this manner our Church was dispers'd long before *Luther*, among the greater multitude of the followers of the corrupted Roman Church; as a handful of wheat lies scatter'd in a bushel of Chaff, and though it it did not appear in Pomp and Grandeur, yet that external Splendour is not essential to the truth of a Church, your own men may be convinced by the aforementioned examples.

Secondly, if your Champions speak strictly of the Religion, which we profess in the Church of *England*, they are under a mistake, when they make *Luther* or *Zwinglius* the Authors of it, for our Reformation began some time after, and was both begun, and carried on with great deliberation and consideration under *Edward* the 6th. by publick Authority,

thority, whose proper province it is to take notice of what is amiss in a Kingdom or Commonwealth, whether it be in Church or State, and to reform and mend it. It's no great matter, when a Reformation begins, so the Reformation be but just; and if such a Reformation had begun but yesterday, that would not have made it unlawful, and that our Reformation was just and necessary hath been prov'd by our Divines beyond all reasonable contradiction, and how could it but be just, when the Decrees of the Church of *Rome* controll'd the Word of the Living God, and vyed with the Oracles of the Gospel. How and when the several Errors crept into that Church, is not material to determine, it's enough we found them there, and it was God's mercy not to give all the learned Men of that age over to believe a lye. But it's pretty to hear your Church-men talk of the novelty of our Religion, when it is evident to all the understanding World, that our first Reformers began no new Religion, but desired only to keep to the Old. All their endeavour was to keep to the Religion of the Bible, and to cut off all superfluities, and things prejudicial to

to Salvation, and was there any hurt in that? They saw, that many things then in use in the Church of *Rome* were diametrically opposite to the Doctrines and practises of the Primitive Church, and they justly thought it their Duty to reduce the Church to the antient Pattern; the prouder Clergy of the Roman Church would not yield to it, but would have all their new fangles, and all their additions to the antient Symbols received as Articles of Faith, though all perish'd, and the coat of Christ were rent into a thousand pieces; the more humble, and more moderate of the Clergy, saw the pride and insolence of the other, and trembled, and thus we and they parted; we kept to the old Religion, and your Men chose the new, and much good it may do you with it; and pray Judge by this, which is the Schismatick Church, we or they? we that would have healed *Israel*, or they that would not be healed; so that it is not our Religion that began so lately as 150 years ago, about *Luthers* time, but it's yours that commenced then; for you then embraced the new additions to the antient Catholick Creeds with greater greediness, and were resolv'd to maintain that by Bravado's, which you were not

able to defend with Arguments. It's a very ordinary thing for people, who once incline to the Communion of the Roman Church to demand of us, before they go over, whither a person may be saved in that Church. The Charity and moderation our Divines usually express in their answer to this Query, I am sensible hath done our Church some harm whereas the Roman Priests, being bold in their uncharitableness, and damning all that are out of their Communion, make some weak people believe, that they must be in the right, because they are more daring in their Asseverations. We have far greater reason to be peremptory in excluding the Members of the Church of *Rome* from Salvation, than they have to exclude us, for if that Church be guilty of Idolatry (as I see, your Divines find it a very hard task to answer the Arguments of our learned Men, that prove it.) Those that are guilty of this Crime may soon be resolved by the Apostle what their lot is like to be in another World; for *No Idolater*, saith *St. Paul*, meaning one that lives, and dies so, *shall inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9. yet we are modest, and whatever the principles of that Church may lead Men  
to,

to, we hope, there may be many in that Church, that either, while they live in the Communion of that Church, have an aversion from the dangerous, and Idolatrous practices of it, or sometimes before they die do heartily repent of the absurd, and unreasonable Doctrines, and Worship, they have too long asserted, and complied with, and of such we cannot but entertain a very favourable opinion, and indeed I could name you some very famous Men both in *France* and *Italy*, who, though they have continued in the Communion of that Church, *i. e.* have not joyn'd themselves to any particular publick Protestant Church, yet have not approv'd of such things in the Roman Church, as manifestly obstructs Mens Salvation, and though like *Nicodemus* they have not dared openly to avow their dislike of such Errors, for fear of danger, yet in their hearts they have abhorr'd them, and declared so much to their Friends, and intimate Acquaintance. And though their seeming Communion with a Church so Erroneous, cannot be totally excused, because it looks like a tacite approbation of her Errors, yet since we read of *Joseph*, that he was a Disciple of Christ secretly, and notwithstanding his

not confessing Christ publickly, accepted of God, we hope such Mens continuing in the external Communion of the Roman Church is not a willful Error, but rather a pardonable Infirmary, a timorousness which hath nothing of malice in it, and therefore will not hinder them from Salvation. We know not what mercy God may shew to many poor people in that Church, who are invincibly Ignorant, and never saw a Bible, from whence they might rectifie their mistakes, and do live honestly in this present World; but we must withal confess, that the Servant, who hath known his Masters will, and hath not done it, shall be beaten with many stripes, and whether those that have been enlightened in our Church, and have tasted the good Word of God, and cannot but see our Agreement with the Gospel, and after all this embrace the Errors of the Roman Church, whether these will be excusable at the last day, we justly doubt of; to live in great Errors is to live in Sin, but where that living in Errors is joyn'd with resistance of great light, and knowledge, there the Sin becomes all Crimson, which was but of a faint red before; and if this be the Character of Christ's Friends

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to do whatsoever he commands us, then the inference is very easie, that those cannot be Christ's Friends, nor reign with in Heaven, that willfully leave undone, what they know he hath commanded, and set up a new Worship, which he hath no where commanded : Madam, had you never seen such a thing as the Scripture, your going over to that Church might have deserved some Apology, but when you were surrounded with the beams of that light which shines in darkness, as St. *Peter* calls the Word, with all those rayes about you, to shut your eyes, and desperately to venture upon the Church, which enjoyns Men to live against some of Gods Laws, as against, *Exod.* 20. 5, 6. and *Matth.* 26. 27. &c. and consequently obliges them to prepare for God's displeasure ; this, I confess, is an Action, which, as it favours of great willfulness, so I question, if you die in't without serious repentance, whether the Joys you hope for, will ever fall to your share. If your Church-men do mean honestly, and do truly aim at the Peace of Christendom, and in good earnest design the Union, of Men that profess the Name of Christ, why will not they part with those Doctrines that are so great an offence,

offence, not only to all Protestants, but to Jews and Mahometans too? If that worshipping of Saints and Images be not necessary, but only useful, why will not they quit that Worship, which by their own pretences is needless, especially when they might do so much good by it? If the Cup was formerly given to the Laity, why will not they to effect the aforesaid Union, restore it to the Laity? If the substance of the Sacrament, and the comfort arising from it, may remain entire, without obliging Men to believe a Transubstantiation, or Adoration of the consecrated Wafer, why will not they for peace sake lay aside such Doctrines, which neither themselves, nor any Creature understands? If Heaven and Hell are sufficient motives to a Holy Life, why will not they for quietness sake renounce their Doctrine of Purgatory, which by their own confession hath no ground in Scripture?

Madam, I have that charitable opinion of you, that if you had but taken a view of the Worship of the Church of *Rome*, as it is practic'd beyond Sea, in places where there is no fear of contradiction from any Hereticks, where they may freely and securely act according to their prin-



Principles, had you seen the mode of worshipping the Virgin *Mary* at *Rome*, or in *Spain*, or *Italy*, the sight of it would have certainly discourag'd you from embracing that Religion, which now you seem to be mainly delighted with ; for indeed the Religion of the Church of *Rome* at this time, if a Man were to guess from that, which hath the greatest outward Veneration, is little else than a Worship of the Virgin *Mary*. The very Beggars beyond-Sea in begging of Alms, beg more for the Virgin *Mary*'s sake, than for Christ's sake. This, Madam, I know to be true, who am no stranger to Foreign parts ; and I will assure you, that in those Cities or Towns, where both Papists and Protestants have the free exercise of their Religion, you shall live Twenty years in a Town before you hear that any Protestant is turned Papist, (so few charms are there in the Exercise of their Religion beyond Sea) but you shall not be above a year or two in such a Town, before you hear that several Papists are turned Protestants (such a force hath truth ;) The Religion of the Church of *Rome*, as it is practis'd in *England*, looks harmless. Now and then upon some great Festival they shew you a Picture of the Virgin *Mary*,  
or

or of some other Saint, and the honest Priest qualifies every Doctrine, makes the Errors soft and plausible, and they dare not, living in a Protestant Country, serve the Host of Heaven, I mean Saints and Angels with all their Appertenances, as they do in places, where there are no Protestants to watch them.

Here their Religion seems to be without a sting, and is clad in the fleece of Sheep; but if you could but make a Voyage into *Spain* or *Italy*, I doubt not but you would see the Venome of it, and avoid it: and the only way not to be of the Church of *Rome*, would be to go to *Rome*, provided you do not go without your Bible. In good truth, that Church hath turn'd Christianity into a meer outward Pomp and Splendor, which ravishes the eye, but can never content a Man's reason. The glistering Gold in their Temples, the curious Images of Saints and Angels, the numerous and stately Altars, the mighty Silver Statues, the rich and glorious Vestments you see up and down in their Churches, strike the Senses into a kind of extasie, and it must be Sense only, for a considerate mind, that searches the inside of things as well as the outside, cannot be so easily gull'd and deceiv'd; and

and this outward Pomp they make not the least sign of the truth of their Church, not remembring, that if this be a good sign, the idolatrous People in *Japan* and *China*, whose Temples are infinitely more shining and glorious, will have a better Title to the true Church than they: I must confess, that in Policy, and Worldly Craft and Cunning, the Church of *Rome* exceeds ours, for they have not only turn'd the Spiritual Worship of the Gospel into a Sensual Service, into outward Religious Formalities, a thing strangely pleasing to flesh and blood; but they have Shooes that will fit all sorts of Feet, great and small, and have Remedies for all Distempers, and you may go to Heaven in that Church either through the straight way, or through the broad, which you please; they can fit the Melancholy Person, and the Jovial; they have Monasteries and Nunneries, and Severities to content the one, and know how to allow greater liberty to the other; they can either send a Man to Happiness through a tedious task of Mortification, if he likes that method best, or help him thither by a quicker dispatch, by Confession, Attrition, and Absolution upon a Death-bed, when the Man can hold Sin and the World

World no longer: Live, or die, you cannot do amiss in that Church, for living you may be forgiven, and after Death you may be pray'd out of Purgatory, sooner or later, according as you will spend Money upon Masses, for Gold doth strangely quicken these Supplications.

Such a Church, Madam, you have espoused; and divorced your self from one that prefers the Wisdom of God, and of the Gospel, before the Wisdom of the Flesh, and glories in dealing plainly and honestly with all Men, that keeps close to the Scriptures, and yet is not against those pious Customes of Antiquity, which are not contradictory to the Scriptures, that generously maintains the Prerogative of God; and gives no other Honour to Saints and Angels, but what may consist with the Glory of her Creator; that hath made no new Articles of Faith, but keeps to the old, and thinks it Rebellion against God to enjoin things as necessary to Salvation, which God never made so; that urges the strictest Life, and encourages nothing but what may promote true Piety and Devotion; that hath no more Ceremonies but what are decent, and labours to free Religion at once from Slovenliness and Superstition; that secures the Right  
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of Sovereign Princes, and teaches her Children to live like good Subjects, and good Christians ; and though it be her misfortune, that too many of her pretended Members live like Enemies of Christianity, yet that's not long of her Doctrines and Constitutions, but long of the Stubbornness of Men, who will not be reform'd by her Precepts : As no Man blames Christ or his Apostles, because *Judas* was a Hypocrite, or because *Simon Magus* profess'd their Religion ; so they betray great Ignorance and Simplicity, that, for the monstrous Impieties of many that profess themselves Members of our Assemblies, despise and slight our Church, which in her Principles is most averse from all such practices ; a Church, which as for mine own particular, I have deliberately and premeditatedly embraced and chosen, so, I hope, I shall never be so much forsaken of God, or of my Reason, as to quit it to become a Papist. I have not been altogether a careless Observer of the several Christian Churches, dispers'd through the World. Desire of mine own Salvation hath made me take particular notice, what Corruption there is in them, and what Affinity they have with the Primitive Professors of Christianity : And

I must freely confess upon a serious Examination of the Scripture, and the Fathers of the three first Centuries after Christ, that from my Heart I think there is no Church this day in all the Christian World, be it Eastern or Western, that in her Principles and Constitutions bears so much of the Image of the truly Primitive Church, or comes so near it, as the Church of *England*; a Church, which as your Fore-fathers had courage to burn for, so I verily believe, that he understands not her Innocent Designs, and excellent Rules, that dares not die a Martyr in her cause.

*Once more your Faithful*

*Friend to serve you,*

A. Horneck.

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F I N I S.

